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ARTICLE I.

THE WORK AND THE MAN: A MEMORIAL OF REV. STEPHEN  
PEET.

REV. STEPHEN PEET was born at Sandgate, Vt., February 20, 1797. In his infancy, his parents removed to Lee, Mass., so that his boyhood was among the Berkshire hills, which were at that time the refuge of the Puritan faith, during the defections which prevailed on the shores of the Bay.

At the age of sixteen he joined the church under the charge of Rev. Dr. Hyde, and, soon after, his parents removed to Ohio, where his father died, suddenly, in the following year. Thus thrown upon his own resources, and dependent mainly upon his own labor, he resolved to work out a thorough education for the Christian ministry. The brave resolution was, in itself, not the least important instrument in forming the pioneer missionary; and every step, as he pressed on, working manhood out of hardship, and personal resource out of external want, was a study preparatory to the building of the churches of Wisconsin, of Beloit College, and of Chicago Theological Seminary.

In 1819 he entered Yale College, and graduated with honor in 1823. His theological studies were pursued in part at New Haven, Princeton and Auburn, and in part at Norfolk, Ct., with Rev. Ralph Emerson, then pastor in that place, and afterward professor in the Andover Theological Seminary. Thus his own training had something of that combination of the studious with the practical, which is such a characteristic feature of the Seminary which he afterwards aided in planning and planting. In his own case, certainly, the church could ill have spared the practical man.

Among several fields of labor which presented themselves, he selected the frontier field of Euclid, Ohio, a town adjoining the then village of Cleveland, where his predecessor used to preach half the time. Here, in obedience to his instinct for discerning want and organizing relief, he became interested in the sailors and boatmen on western waters, and made efficient efforts in their behalf, both at the West and the East. This work so grew upon his heart and his hands that he left his pastorate and devoted himself to it. He had, however, previously made his influence felt, not only in his own parish, but widely over the Reserve, especially by his labors in revivals of religion, in which his manly force and earnestness were sometimes signally blessed.

While engaged in the Bethel cause, he resided, from 1835 to 1837, in Buffalo, New York, where, in addition to superintending the work throughout his field, he edited the *Bethel Magazine* and the *Buffalo Spectator*, a religious paper, which was afterwards merged in the New York *Evangelist*.

As population was moving westward up the lakes, he must go with it. He was invited to Michigan, but the Presbyterian church in Green Bay was the only one in the new Territory of Wisconsin, and there he went, and labored for two years, before taking charge of the first Presbyterian church in Milwaukee, which was second in the Territory.

During his ministry in Green Bay he had the satisfaction of seeing built the first house of worship of his order in Wisconsin, and hearing the first church bell, and especially of welcoming

to the communion of the saints many converts gathered in the wilderness by his own labors.

In 1839, he made a missionary tour through the Territory, of which we have some memorials that illustrate the man and the field. The roads were then but partially opened. The journey must, therefore, be made on horseback, and for much of the way by following Indian trails. He started June 10, 1839, and, from the incidents jotted in his diary for the first twenty-four hours, we can see something of the work to be done and of the way in which it was done by him, not only on that journey, but for a large part of the nine following years. After leaving the settlement at Green Bay, and the near village of Depere, his first incident in the woods was meeting and killing "a rattlesnake four feet long, which lay across the way" — fit emblem of the aim of his life, by the application of the Gospel to moral evil, to fulfill the promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. Pursuing his journey, he falls in with men at work on the road, to whose spiritual good he tries to minister by "leaving tracts and a Testament, with a prayer for God's blessing." The dwelling of each settler is of necessity a house of entertainment for travelers; so, making "Wright's at 12 o'clock, he dined, fed his horse, and gave the children books." Further on, he comes upon a squad of men camping out "for months, to work on the road, with no Bible and nothing to read on the Sabbath." His sympathies are touched, and after conversation with them, he tries to provide them with reading matter from his stock of tracts and testaments.

As the day declined, he came upon two families near each other, forming the nucleus of a settlement. Here were five members of the church at Green Bay. "Some of them had not heard a sermon for more than a year. They were rejoiced to see me, and urgent that I should spend the night; concluded, as it was too late to reach Stockbridge, to stay and preach. At evening, sent word to a neighbor a mile distant, and to some men at work on the road. Preached to a little company, mostly professing Christians (the company on the road being Catho-

lies, and their leader an infidel, did not come). The house was a log shanty, 12 feet by 18; one room; three beds in a row on one side. The pole and long shingles of the roof formed the ceiling overhead. Before preaching, I walked out into the woods, where, by the side of a large oak, I found a closet and opportunity to collect my thoughts, and select a subject for preaching. The people were attentive and interested. After a good rest, I rose at four in the morning; heard the birds singing sweetly in the trees around the dwelling. I went to a little spot of improvement to see my horse, and came upon a small log hut, erected some years since by the troops when making roads. Here I found a closet for my morning devotions, where I spent an hour; wrote a little in my journal with a pencil. Returning to the house, found breakfast ready. After worship, I started on my way."

The whole journey was marked by similar incidents, showing his personal interest for the souls of those he met. His way led him by Stockbridge, Fond du Lac, Fox Lake, Fort Winnebago (Portage), Madison, Aztalan, Fort Atkinson, Whitewater, East Troy, Prairie du Lac (Milton), Janesville, Beloit, Delavan, Geneva, Burlington, Southport (Kenosha), Racine, Milwaukee, Watertown, and Brothertown, to Stockbridge again, July 11th — more than a full month of long summer days, through great lonely forests, and long, sun-beaten prairies, preparing the way of the Lord. The last day's journey was forty-five miles, and its record closes thus: "Reached home at half-past nine o'clock. Heard the bell about two miles distant — the first sound of the kind for nearly five weeks. Through the goodness of God, found my family all well. Thanks be to his holy name."

The following summary of the results of this exploration was given in the *Home Missionary* :

"I was absent nearly five weeks; traveled 575 miles; visited 31 different places, and 64 families; preached 14 sermons, delivered one temperance address; attended one funeral; organized one church; administered the communion three times, and baptism twice; attended the meeting of the Presbytery; distributed several Testaments, a few of Baxter's Call and Alleine's Alarm, and several thousand pages of tracts and children's books."



He found in the Territory, six Presbyterian or Congregational ministers, five Baptist, four Episcopalian, four Methodist, one Dutch Reformed, and two Unionists; and Presbyterian or Congregational churches as follows:

<i>Organized.</i>		<i>To be Organized.</i>	
Green Bay.....	70 members	Whitewater.....	20 members
Stockbridge.....	70 "	Jefferson.....	20 "
Milwaukee.....	30 "	Madison.....	20 "
Racine.....	20 "	Troy.....	10 "
Southport.....	30 "	Mineral Point.....	20 "
East Troy.....	12 "	—90	
Prairie du Lac.....	10 "	<i>Scattered Professors.</i>	
Beloit.....	30 "	Jefferson county.....	20 members
Geneva.....	12 "	Dane county.....	20 "
Prairie Village (Wauke-		Delavan.....	10 "
sha).....	36 "	Spring Prairie.....	15 "
	320	Rock Prairie.....	15 "
Expected additions.....	90 "	Fond du Lac and Fox	
	410 "	Lake.....	10 "
		—90	
		180	
		410	
		—	
		Total membership....590	

The report of this exploration, when published, was like a trumpet-call to rally the ministerial host in behalf of the young Territory, at the moment when the most immediate and energetic efforts were needed to meet the wants of the great wave of population which was just beginning to break upon the shore of Lake Michigan. The concluding notes of that trumpet-call are worth repeating here:

"From the above details, it will be seen that at least *ten* missionaries are wanted immediately for this Territory. This number could be advantageously employed, would obtain from half to two-thirds of their support from the people, meet with a hearty welcome, and find enough to do." \* \* \* "The time has come when this country must be provided with the ministrations of the Gospel. The way is now open, and an *immediate supply is demanded*. The peculiar circumstances of the people have heretofore prevented the introduction of many ministers among them; but their necessities and their desires, like the accumulation of an obstructed stream, have been rising and increasing till the anxiety is very great and the demand imperious. The people will do all they can and all they ought; make any effort, any sacrifice, if they can only have a good minister. The cry everywhere is: *Send us ministers—send us good ministers—SEND THEM*. In behalf of these destitute churches, and of the many scattered children of

God who have none to break to them the bread of life, and in behalf of the numerous and increasing population of this rising Territory, I reiterate the cry, and earnestly call on you, and on our brethren, and the churches throughout the land: **SEND US MINISTERS—SEND US GOOD MINISTERS—SEND THEM NOW!"**

Green Bay church—the first in Wisconsin—was at an old military and fur-trading station, and belongs rather to the interval between the red men and the white. John Jacob Astor, on account of his interest in the fur-trading company, gave its bell and \$500 toward the house, which was erected, as such things were done all through his life, during Mr. Peet's ministry. It was now time to put the firmest heart, the projecting mind and the working hand in the focus of the new life, and Mr. Peet was called to the second church of the Territory, which had been formed April 13, 1837, at Milwaukee.

Mr. Peet was minister of the First Presbyterian church in Milwaukee from October 1, 1839, to June 1, 1841. During this period, the ecclesiastical system of Wisconsin assumed form, and it could not but be that such a man as he was should have a large part in the movement. But in this, as in everything else, he only wrought with others, not to effect any personal end, but to provide for the work which they had to do. He threw his whole self into every work; but, if we have read him aright, few men have been more unselfish. He did great things, because the work and the heart and the hand had come together, but not in any personal ambition. He was patient of labor and of hardship. He could bear hard work, and hard fare, and much hard speech, but he could not bear to have his devoted labor attributed to selfish aims. The writer has seen him under many tests which try men's souls, but hardly has he seen in him, or in any other man, such indignant grief as seemed to shake his very frame, at the title of "Bishop of Wisconsin." He would not be called Rabbi; and, watching him, one came to learn something of what that meaneth—"My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish his work."

That was the spirit which was already at work, bringing the churches of Wisconsin together, before he appeared in

their councils. He was not present when, in January 1, 1839, the Presbytery of Wisconsin was formed of one Presbyterian and one Congregational church, on a plan of union of their own devising, and without connection with any Synod or General Assembly. In the subsequent consultations which resulted, October 6, 1840, in the organization of the Presbyterian and Congregational Convention of Wisconsin, he was present, and, no doubt, from his hearty sympathy in the spirit of the movement, and his organizing and practical genius, he bore a leading part in the development of the body, which the fervent Christian spirit of that brotherhood of missionaries formed for itself. But what that spirit was, and whence it was, we may judge from the account of it given by Rev. Jeremiah Porter—then of Green Bay, now of Brownsville, Texas—who met the Wisconsin brethren on that occasion for the first time. He says:

"The object of the meeting was to see if the two denominations could cause the prayer of the Saviour to be answered, so far as related to us: 'That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me' Many of us deemed it highly important that, in laying foundations in this region, so lately redeemed from the heathen, there should 'be no division among us.' For this we prayed very earnestly, and a union was consummated after near two days candid deliberation, and after a touching, melting season of social prayer. God seemed evidently in that place by his Spirit, moving upon the hearts of his ministers and members, and drawing them together as kindred drops mingle into one. Many brethren felt that they had received an unction at this meeting, and that a blessing would follow them to their people."

The two churches of January, 1839, are now (October, 1840) increased to sixteen, eight of each name. And what shall we say of that "unction" which those brethren felt—that brotherly unity, "like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down upon the skirts of his garments?" It has not ceased to flow. Each Convention in the thirty years which have since passed has felt its blessed influence. It has pervaded not only the relations of these churches, but their rela-

tions with all other denominations which have labored in the vineyard with them. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

The existence and order of the churches being arranged, the next thing was for them to move forward and possess the good land. Mr. Peet, at Milwaukee, the gate of the Territory, saw immigration pouring in with a constant and swelling flood; and he was called to leave his people, and, as agent of the American Home Missionary Society, to follow these newcomers to their new homes, and plant the Gospel there. How earnestly the work was done, we may judge from the glance we have taken of his first missionary tour. For the magnitude of the work, we take the fact that the Territory of 30,000 in 1840, had become a State with 300,000 people in 1850. For its efficiency and success, we compare the one church which he formed in 1837, with the one hundred churches when he resigned his agency in 1848.

For there was other work to be done. We are to love the Lord "with the mind," as well as with "heart and soul and strength." Therefore the sons of the Pilgrims who landed on the shore of Lake Michigan, like their fathers, who landed on the shore of Massachusetts Bay, thought upon a college. It was in accordance with the spirit of all these men, as well as of him, who was in such things a representative man, that their action, though prompt and efficient, was not hasty or unconsidered. It was carefully studied by individuals, and by ecclesiastical bodies, and by several large and earnest conventions, called for this special purpose, in which they took counsel with one another, and asked counsel of the Father of Lights. The conventions held in the old stone church at Beloit, in particular, were renewals of that scene of prayerful counsel, in which the hearts of the young missionaries and churches were enlarged and flowed together, at the first formation of the Wisconsin Convention; only, this time, the greater numbers, the longer duration of the consultations, and their successive repetitions, gathered round the origin of Beloit College, an atmosphere of faith and prayer and love

and truth, which has rested over the college like that of the conventions. May it continue and increase till the earth is full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord!

The college interest, in its turn, of course, needed the man. Beside his instrumentality in the preliminary studies and movements, he took a leading or principal part in securing the first subscriptions of \$1,000 from Rev. Henry Barber, of \$7,000 from the people of Beloit, and of \$10,000 from Hon. T. W. Williams, which preceded the laying of the corner-stone, and then of that memorable subscription of \$10,000, mainly from the struggling missionaries of the Northwest, which has made the college such a sacred trust for all that shall come after them.

In 1850, after two years of labor for the college, he was laid upon what seemed his dying bed. There are many now who remember that Thursday when his physicians had given up the case. His affairs were arranged, even to directions for the funeral. Brethren in the ministry and friends had spoken and received the last words. Nothing seemed left but prayer. And there was prayer — throughout the house, and in meetings in the village and in neighboring towns, and at the convention then in session. On the following morning he asked to be left alone, and spent a time in prayer. He then desired the physicians to be called, and said to them, "Gentlemen, I have all confidence in your skill, but I am assured that the Lord has yet four or five years' work for me to do." And he recovered from that hour.

While his other work was preparing, he preached for two or three years at Batavia, Illinois, and, while there, initiated and carried to success a plan for an academical institution.

The church, the fellowship of the churches, the academy and the college, needed yet one member for the completeness of the system. And the organizing and energizing faculty, which had planned and formed church, convention and college, now had the work of uniting sympathies, thoughts and energies in the scheme of a Theological Seminary for the Northwest. In this he labored with the ardor of one who

feels that he has a great work to do, and he must work while the day lasts.

Within about one year, the plan had been matured, the Board of Trust appointed, the charter secured, and subscriptions obtained to the amount of about \$50,000. He returned from a journey to the East in behalf of this object, on the 14th of March, 1855, and on the same day sent out a call to the members of the Board of Directors, to meet on the 27th, to organize under the charter, elect professors, and put the Seminary in operation. Thus at last his eyes looked upon the land of promise. But his zeal had consumed him. On the next day he was seized with fever, which resulted in inflammation of the lungs, with which he died, at 3 A.M. on Wednesday, March 21, peacefully entering upon his rest and his reward.

On the 27th the Directors came, as he had called them, but his form was already reposing in Beloit, where so much of his labor had been. They carried forward his work, having first remembered him in the following resolutions :

"*Resolved*, 1. That in the unexpected death of Rev. Stephen Peet, the Chicago Theological Seminary has lost one of its first and most ardent, as well as able and efficient friends.

"2. That while we bow with submission to the will of Him with whom are the issues of life and death, and whose hand we recognize in this event, and while we believe it will be overruled for the best, we are yet unable to fathom the mystery of the Providence which has so suddenly removed one whose labors seemed to be essential to the prosperity of this enterprise.

"3. That, as his associates in the work in which death overtook him, we tender to his family our sympathies with them in their bereavement, and assure them that we deeply feel our loss in the event that so severely afflicts them, and that we shall ever cherish the memory of our departed brother as a wise and devoted minister of Christ, and a warmly beloved co-laborer with us.

"4. That we approve of the design to erect a monument over the grave of Mr. Peet, and shall esteem it a privilege to contribute towards defraying the expenses."

Similar resolutions were adopted by the Fox River Association, of which he was a member ; and many ministers and others gladly united in making up the fund for the proposed monument.

The erection of the monument is thus described by Rev. D. Clary, long a true yoke-fellow in his work, and his successor in the home missionary agency :

"The meeting of the General Convention of Wisconsin at Beloit, in October following, was selected as a suitable time for placing the monument at his grave. Accordingly, the Convention took a walk on Saturday afternoon, October 6, and united with the citizens of Beloit, the Faculty and members of the college, and engaged in services appropriate to the occasion. Addresses were delivered by Rev. J. Porter, of Green Bay, and President Chapin, of the college."

This was in October, 1855, just eighteen years since his first arrival in the Territory. They were years of great labor, cheerfully, even eagerly done, in the hope of a great future. Great things in that future his own eyes looked upon ; greater things are opening around us.

He rests from his labors, and his works do follow him.

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## ARTICLE II.

### A NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES.

THE Pilgrim fathers did a good work for church polity ; but they left something to be completed by their children. Considered in relation to its Head, the church is a Theocracy, with no province but to obey. Considered in relation to its form, it is a Democracy, composed of equals, gathered into assemblies called churches, independent but affiliated. Considered in relation to the world, it is the kingdom of God among men, "the pillar and ground of the truth," the evangelizer of all nations.

The primitive churches were obedient to the duties arising from this three-fold relation. They made the will of Christ supreme, and resisted all legislative claims. They recognized the essential equality of believers, the independence of each congregation, and the brotherhood of the household of saints. And they preached the Gospel with such zeal that the whole civilized world soon received it.



In a few centuries, however, ambition and corruption carried the church away from these divine principles to a foundation of human device. We will not sketch this apostacy, for we have other work in hand. Suffice it to say, that the heavenly democracy became first an aristocracy, then a hierarchy, and at last an unlimited monarchy ruled by an infallible Pope.

The Reformation was but a partial return to the primitive principles and model. The Bible was rescued, indeed, and enthroned again as the supreme law of faith and practice, but the Reformers shrunk from its democratic doctrine of the church.

Thus the Reformation stood when the Pilgrims arose to lay the axe at the root of the trees. They drew from the Scriptures the true doctrine of the church; and, in spite of persecution, exile, and even death, they embodied that doctrine in Congregational churches, independent in authority, autonomous in nature, united by love into one brotherhood. They attained, and embodied in the churches they gathered, the two-fold idea of the church respecting its form; namely, the perfect autonomy of each congregation, and the unity in Christian fellowship of the whole body of believers. It was their special function to establish the first and most fundamental of these two principles in the face of the centralized, despotic systems of church government, to stand naked and alone amidst angry enemies armed with sword and fagot; it is ours, surrounded by friends and favoring circumstances, to carry out the second of these principles unto the completeness prayed for by the Master.

Manifestly the first duty of the Pilgrims was to establish permanently the principle of church government which was opposed by all so bitterly, the formative principle of Congregationalism, and the one most radical and revolutionary; namely, the complete independence of each local church. This established, the Scriptural polity is safe; this lost, and all is lost. At that time the danger lay wholly here. There was persecuting pressure from without; and even the tendency within, among the ministry themselves, was at times quite



strong towards a centralized form of government. Indeed, the most subtle attempts to subvert the centre principle of Congregationalism, arose in the denomination itself; but the history is too long to be written here. Enough that these Congregational churches, assailed by their enemies, enticed by their ministers, stood firm through all, till now their formative principle has been securely established. While quite half of the evangelical churches in the land are Congregational in their form of government, other polities have been greatly ameliorated through the influence of our principles. In nearly all, the laity now have a voice; while the influence of the congregation upon the repositories of power in other forms, is constantly increasing.

While guarding so zealously and emphasizing so strongly the completeness and independence of particular congregations, the Pilgrim fathers, though apprehending the co-ordinate principles of our polity, did not develop it in its fullness. They believed in the unity of the body of Christ — that all are one; but they saw, and felt too, on every side, a unity enforced by pains and penalties. From the Pope down to the Presbytery, there was a struggle after a false unity — one resting on force instead of love, one born of policy instead of the Spirit. While they did not discard the idea of Christian union, they sought to realize it in the only way, in the free fellowship of the churches.

Robinson said, "May not the officers of one or many churches meet together to discuss and consider of matters for the good of the church or churches? I deny it not, so they infringe no order of Christ or the liberty of the brethren." Neal says that Robinson "allowed councils for advice, but not for exercising authority or jurisdiction." "Questionless, the convocation of councils is the 'keystone,' the great conservative branch of Congregationalism; but they were seldom called when the churches were few and widely separated."

Speaking of the more important matters belonging to the particular church, Goodwin says that "it should be with the privacy and knowledge of neighbor churches; but that, when

assembled, they have not the power of the ordination or deposition of a minister, but as agents of the church." "And such was the practice of the early churches; and the records of the Plymouth and neighboring churches express the ordinations, dismissions and depositions of ministers, as 'the act of the church by the advice of the council.'" The authority of a council, in any and in all matters, is accurately defined by Mather, who drafted the Cambridge Platform, in words which have become a maxim with us, namely; "The decree of a council hath so much force as there is force in the reason of it." Their formal statement, however, respecting fellowship in communion and in synods, may be found in the XV. and XVI. chapters of the Cambridge Platform.

The practice of these churches runs in exact accord with their principles. They called councils at ordinations, dismissions, depositions from the ministry, and troubles in the churches, to advise, but not to exercise authority. They also held two General Synods, one in 1637, the other in 1646-48. Other Synods were also called, as the Synod of 1662, which introduced the Half-way Covenant; the Reforming Synod of 1679-80; the Saybrook Synod, which adopted the plan of consociations; and others, less important. They thus exhibited the unity of believers through these councils and synods, composed of messengers of the churches, called as occasion required, but having no authority or jurisdiction over the individual believer or the particular church. The idea of *stated* conferences of churches, for co-operation and mutual benefit and communion, seems not to have been entertained by them.

Thus the oneness of their churches was visibly exhibited indeed; but only occasionally and partially. For over two hundred years, from 1648 to 1852, no general meeting of our churches was held. It may be that they could not have entered upon a system of stated meetings without the loss of "the centre principle of Congregationalism." Certain it is that ministerial associations did not smooth the way for them, but rather hedged it up by their tendency towards a form of government subversive of the churches' liberties. The Pilgrims

deserve great honor for preserving the formative principle of our polity, for sticking resolutely to that which is alone of prime importance. Still, their history reveals a deficiency in united co-operation, in *esprit de corps*, in consequent growth and power. Each stood so independent of all the rest, that the Congregational household could not grow, as it otherwise would have done, through disintegration, the scattering of its members into other communions. The true doctrine of the church was in this way imperiled again. Other systems were swallowing us up, because, to show our independence, we sought union with them rather than with one another. Previous to 1843, it was "computed that four hundred churches, or more, had been gathered in the West, for the Presbyterian church, by the benevolence of Connecticut alone." And it was stated at the same time, on "high Presbyterian authority, that not less than *fifteen hundred* of their churches (were) essentially Congregational in their origin and habits." A Presbyterian once said of the churches in Presbytery on the Western Reserve, "The fact is, nearly all our churches are purely Congregational in their organization, *without one element of Presbyterianism.*" There has been a defect in the working of our polity, or else the divine doctrine of the church would not have proved itself less efficient than human systems. That defect lay in our lack of union and co-operation, and it is our mission to remove it.

The Scriptures teach the unity of the body of Christ, which is the church. This we have ever held, and also in theory the duties which arise from it. Still, until recently, our churches have acted too much like strangers drawn together in counsel and co-operation, not by love and a common interest, but only when danger impends. We must exhibit the churches of Christ in this fullness of Christian fellowship, as well as in their completeness of individual independence. This done, and the problem of the centuries — how can the visible unity of all believers be secured without detriment to the individual liberty? — will be solved.

The Pilgrims adopted as their model the apostolic council at

Jerusalem; but they did not make enough of their system. They confined it to the ordination or dismissal of a pastor, the settlement of difficulties, etc.; they did not meet together to consider the general interests of the churches. Here was the defect, from which we have suffered greatly; but Maine has the honor of devising a system of conferences of churches, in harmony with the first principles of our polity, which supplies this defect, gives new life to the denomination, and promises to be extended until the prayer of Christ shall be answered in the visible unity of all his disciples. Unity is secured in these stated assemblies of ministers and laymen, while danger of centralization is avoided. When, however, the Rev. Nathan Douglas, in 1822, at a ministerial association held in Alfred, York county, Maine, first suggested the calling of the churches together in conference, it was objected that "in such a combination the individual churches would lose their independence." Notwithstanding, the suggestion was acted upon, and Rev. George Payson was for carrying the idea out, "so as to have a conference in each county, and then combine the county conferences in some form." Thus the system of district and State conferences was begun. The system admits, of course, of a wider application, on the same essential principles, to national, and even ecumenical, conferences or councils; to meet statedly, but to have and to exercise no authority whatever.

Since 1822, the rise of the conference system has been rapid. Now, nearly every Congregational church in our land is connected with some Conference, and nearly every State where Congregational churches are found has its General Conference.\*

\* We note the rise of the conference system :

All the conferences in Maine were organized between 1822 and the close of 1826. The State Conference in 1826. Cong. Quart., VI., 189.

In Massachusetts, of the twenty-four conferences, there were organized :

8 between 1821-1830	5 between 1850-1860
2 " 1830-1840	5 " 1860-1869
3 " 1840-1850	1 date not given.

General Conference in 1860. *Minutes* for 1869.

In New Hampshire, the General Association was organized in 1809.

The Brookfield Associational Conference, of Massachusetts, has almost a rival claim with that of York, Maine. On the 27th of September, 1820, it invited, by unanimous vote, each of the churches in connection with it to send a delegate annually to its meetings in June. These delegates appeared, June 13, 1821, and from that time the June meetings of the Association became conferences of the churches. This arrangement did not, however, take a "*constitutional form*" until June 10, 1828. Whether the invitation of the Brookfield Association would have resulted in the conference system, without the action in Maine or not, it is vain to conjecture. Certain it is, that Maine had a State Conference before the Brookfield Association took its constitutional form of a conference.

There was an abortive attempt in Ohio, earlier than the successful one in Maine; for, in 1809, the Muskingum Association, "similar in form and purpose to the conference of the present day, where there is no association of ministers, was organized;" but how long it lived is not known. Had the emigrant from New England, at an early day, been accustomed to the present system of conferences, the history of Congregationalism in the west would have given us less cause for humiliation.

The working of this system has been most promising. Rev. Albert Cole says: "No one acquainted with the history of religion in this State (Maine), can doubt that this system has been the means of invaluable good; and no child of God,

Admitted lay delegates from conferences in 1859. 8 District conferences; dates not given.—*MS. Letter from Rev. B. P. Stone.*

Vermont has a General Conference of Congregational ministers and churches, organized 1796; admitted lay delegates from consociations in 1822; County Conferences were admitted in 1840 to representation, when not covering the same territory as consociations; in 1857, constitution altered to require two lay delegates to one minister from each conference or consociation.—*MS. Letter from Rev. Aldace Walker.*

The General Conference of Rhode Island was organized in 1809; time when lay delegates were admitted not known.

General Conferences were organized in the other States in the following order: New York, in 1834; Iowa and Wisconsin, in 1840; Michigan, in 1842; Illinois, in 1844; Oregon, in 1848(?); Ohio, in 1852; Kansas, in 1855; Minnesota, in 1856; Nebraska and California, in 1857; Indiana, in 1858; Missouri, in 1865; Connecticut, in 1867; Colorado, in 1868; and New Jersey, in 1869.—*Cong. Quart., XII, 176.*

attending our conferences, can fail to desire their continuance and prosperity. We bless God for them." \* Rev. J. V. Pierce, writing on "Congregationalism in Michigan," briefly tells the story of our early folly and late wisdom. He says: "In May, 1831, I received a commission from the American Home Missionary Society, to labor either in the State of Illinois, or within the Territory of Michigan. \* \* \* I was informed 'that it was best for me, and that it was expected, that I should join the Presbytery;' and, furthermore, 'that it would not be either desirable or wise to organize any Congregational churches.' The reason assigned was, 'that, while Congregationalism did well enough for New England, it was not adapted to the recent settlements of the West.'" He wisely discarded this long-given advice, and went about establishing Congregational churches in Michigan, and with such success that, in 1842, he helped to form the General Association of Michigan. "This," he adds, "in our history was an important movement. It united the Congregational ministers and churches in one body; it gave them an increase of favor and hope for the future; it put them in a position where they could not only defend themselves, but move forward and possess the land which of right belonged to them." † Dr. Henry Cowles says, respecting the organization of the General Conference of Ohio, in 1852, "The highest anticipations here expressed (in correspondence to papers) have been realized." ‡ This Conference is a growing power in the State, unifying and strengthening our churches. Rev. J. H. Dill, in an article on "Congregationalism in Western New York," writes: "The failure of an effort, in 1810, to form a General Association, worked a decline of the Congregational interest." He makes the organization of said Association, in 1834, one of the causes which have worked the increase of Congregational interest at the present day. § Dr. J. P. Thompson, writing on "Congre-

\* Cong. Quart., VI, 189, 190.

† Cong. Quart., II., 192, 196.

‡ Ibid, V., 140.

§ Cong. Quart., I., 154, *seq.*

gationalism in Eastern New York," says: "The formation of the General Association has done more than any other event to give character, strength, unity, vitality, increase and permanence to Congregationalism in New York." Well does he add, "We should encourage *the fellowship of the churches* by means of conferences or conventions, and by such acts of sympathy and love as accord with the primitive communion of churches." \*

Add now to this the acknowledged influence which the General Synod of 1637 had in suppressing the Antinomian heresy; the General Synod of 1646-48, in withstanding Presbyterian tendencies, and in developing our polity through the Cambridge Platform; the General Convention at Albany, in 1852, in throwing off that incubus, "the Plan of Union," and in bringing the eastern and western churches into mutual confidence, co-operation and fellowship; and the National Council at Boston, in 1865, in unifying the denomination and stimulating its activities, and the argument in favor of such gatherings is greatly augmented. Still more, we know of no instance in which these Conferences—district, State and national—composed of pastors and laymen, have attempted to encroach on the completeness and independence of any local congregation. Associations of ministers alone have tried to do it; councils composed of pastors and laymen have tried it; but if conferences have tried it, the record is unknown to us. The admission to them of usually two laymen to one minister, is both a guarantee against usurpation, and a return to the apostolic and primitive model. For during the first centuries they were admitted; but, "after the fourth century, the lower clergy and the laity were entirely excluded from the councils, and bishops only admitted." Besides, the positive exclusion of all idea of authority or jurisdiction over individuals or churches from the conference by express provision, effectually secures the churches in their Divine liberties.

Protestant Christianity has already begun to adopt our system of advisory councils and conferences, as the only one

\* Ibid, II., 41, 42.



on which it can manifest its essential unity. On this principle, all evangelical denominations can present an unbroken front to the common foe. They perceive this; and hence Christian Conventions, Sabbath-School Unions, Young Men's Christian Associations, and their National Conventions, Evangelical Alliances, and their Ecumenical Conferences, are all advisory bodies. These out-stretchings after Christian union, born of the Holy Ghost, are modeled after our conference system, and rest upon the same Scriptural principle. They cannot coerce the least of their members; they can exclude him for cause from their fellowship, and that is all that they can do. We ought to do, what others have already done, extend the principle to embrace the nation.

These encouraging results of our conference system, growing better and better as the system is more generally adopted and efficiently worked, lead us to ask—not, Shall the system be continued? so much of our mission at least is settled;—but, Shall not the system be enlarged? Have we yet fully exhausted the riches of the second fundamental principle of our polity? Is the fellowship of our churches as complete as it ought to be? To us it seems clear that God now calls us to go forward, and work the true theory of Christian fellowship still more harmoniously and thoroughly, thereby disclosing to the world its beauty and power. One step in advance ought immediately to be taken. The time has fully come when a National Conference of Congregational churches, to meet statedly, should be organized. “Our churches need it, and one ought to be held,” said the modern Atlas of Congregationalism, in the “Clerical Union,” of New York. Our English brethren, though having little to do with our system of councils, are in this matter far ahead of us. They organized their “Union” in 1831; and is it not time to make Dr. Vaughan's words respecting it our own? He said, in an address before it, “Within the past few years, Independency has appeared strong enough to demonstrate its power of association, in the formation of this Union, and wise enough to perceive the practical objects which might be aided by such means. While



we are animated by that love of liberty which insures to our churches their separate independence, we are, at the same time, so far governed by a love of order, as to be capable of giving to our entire denomination a character of unity, by a Union which renounces all authority to legislate, and all power to coerce." \* Has not a half century of successful experiment on a smaller scale, prepared our churches for a National Conference? Is not such an organization the next logical step in our progress towards the union of all believers? This taken, the final step remains, to gather, through Ecumenical Councils, all our churches in all lands into one body, a visible exhibition of universal Christian brotherhood, in harmony with the perfect autonomy of each local church.

But, one step at a time; we are in our mission, shall we complete it? We have carried our union up to State organizations, with none but good results; have we need of anything beyond? Granting, as we can safely do, that the liberties of our churches will not be endangered by a stated National Conference, what advantages can result from it, commensurate with the expense and trouble?

A stated National Conference will greatly promote the efficiency of our church government. As has been shown, our local and State Conferences have increased our efficiency; the same result has followed the National Convention of 1852 and the National Council of 1865, and will undoubtedly follow the Memorial Convention of 1870. Greater good, we believe, would be done by a National Conference meeting statedly. We need to prove—not merely assert, but prove—that the Scriptural polity is the best polity; that it is not "a rope of sand," as it is charged to be; that it does not leave our churches mere "ecclesiastical atoms;" but, instead, that it combines the greatest efficiency with the greatest liberty consistent with purity and security. The opposite impression must be removed before the churches will generally return to the old primitive way. Our civil government, resting on the will of the people, was declared to be weak, inefficient, sure to go to

\* New Eng. Mem., 449.

pieces at the first internal shock. We thought and said otherwise; but, not until it had been tested by the slaveholders' rebellion, did the glory of its strength fill the earth. Our polity needs testing, needs to show to all other polities unity and strength joined with liberty—the characteristics of the Apostolic days. Its liberty has been secured; its unity and efficiency in Christian love it is our mission to exhibit.

Into such a national gathering of our churches there will be collected our wisest and best men. Measures of the greatest importance, far-reaching in their scope and influence, will come before them to mature. With no power to force or bind the weakest congregation in the land, their measures and proposals must carry with them the weight of reason, in order to their adoption by the churches. The matured wisdom of the few will thus become the accepted wisdom of the many. With no Bishop or Pope to command, we shall have wiser counsel than theirs to guide and plan in the campaigns of our Zion. At present, we have no adequate way for making use of the true statesmanship found in the denomination. We need such a way; we have fallen behind the systems of human device because of this lack. Of course we do not much need an annual or triennial mass-meeting of Congregationalists throughout the land, in which no measures can be carefully matured in committee, nor thoroughly discussed in the body, in which impatience chokes off opposition, and the desire to return home crowds everything into a series of resolutions to be read and adopted without debate; but we do need, in our opinion, a stated National Conference, composed of our wisest men, to make haste slowly, calmly to weigh objections to measures proposed, to discuss them thoroughly, to mature them perfectly, then to state the reasons for them in papers to be sent to State and District Conferences and to local churches for adoption and guidance; thus using, in the best possible way, the statesmanship of the wise to fill up the deficiency of the rest.

The unity of feeling and of action which a stated National Conference will bring about, will be of incalculable service to the cause of the Master. Our benevolent and missionary operations

are carried on by united action in voluntary societies. Perhaps the good work of these societies has not been more conspicuous, abroad or at home, where the money has been expended, than in the churches where the money has been raised, in stimulating every Christian grace. How our churches have multiplied in numbers, increased in unity, grown in grace and in power in the land, since we became "wise enough to perceive the practical objects which might be aided by such means." Had it not been for the stimulating and unifying effect of these voluntary societies, and of the conference system, whose benefits have already been mentioned, our denomination would, to-day, scarcely have had the name to live out of New England. But these agencies, in harmony with our "centre-principle," and the out-growth of our principle of Christian fellowship, have in the last half century developed such hitherto latent forces and activities in Congregationalism, as to astonish ourselves and others alike, and place ours among the most rapidly-growing denominations in the country. We need a National Conference to unify the whole body and stimulate it still more.

In this stirring age, when the powers of darkness are combining, such a council will have work enough to do. With no juridical or supervising authority over church or society, it can give itself wholly to the ways and means of Christian living and labor. Our District and State Conferences are never idle, but are always pressed with work. So it would be with a National Conference. To say nothing of other work which would come before it, we will venture to suggest a hint of labor in which it could well engage. There is a feeling on the part of many, and the number is probably increasing, that the relation of our denominational societies to our churches should be re-adjusted. How it can be done, no one, so far as we know, has attempted to propose. These societies are independent in their management, but dependent on our churches for money to carry them on. Our churches are independent in their action towards them, as in other respects; but they use these societies as their channels or agents in evangelizing the world. Now,

there can exist between these independent bodies, as between our churches themselves, an *advisory relation*, satisfactory to all concerned; and in this way: Let each one of these societies have a representation in the proposed National Conference; let committees be appointed by the Conference upon every department of our activity, said committees to include in their number, respectively, the delegates of these societies; let these committees enter into a thorough examination of the work to be done in their respective departments, the way in which the societies are doing it, their financial management, and whatever else may seem desirable; then let the results, and whatever suggestions are, in their opinion, needed, be reported to the Conference for its action. Now this advisory relation our churches, through a National Conference, could sustain to our denominational societies, without interference with their rights, and with the happiest results. The National Conference would have neither the temptations nor the responsibility of managing such societies, and our churches would be advised respecting their management, wants and labors; confidence would be restored wherever lost, and made the strongest possible; and the societies, as now, would control their own affairs, only asking and obtaining advice from the churches. This re-adjustment of our relation to them has at least the merit of being feasible, without any organic change in the societies themselves, besides being in perfect harmony with the fundamental principles of our polity. Any closer connection might work evil; this connection would increase the purity and efficiency of our societies.

Shall we not have an annual or a triennial National Council of the Congregational churches in our land? The Pilgrim Memorial Convention, at Chicago, in April last, proposed it. The General Association of Indiana has approved such a gathering of our churches. Dr. Bacon is reported to have said, "that though there might have been, thirty years ago, some danger of an assumption of authority by such conference, there was none now. Our churches need it, and one ought to be held." The General Conference of Ohio, in giving its

assent, at its June meeting, at Oberlin, took an important step, it is hoped, towards the organization of such a conference, by appointing a committee of correspondence, to lay the matter before other State organizations and our denominational societies, and, in case of their approval, to represent the Ohio churches in any convention which may be held within the year to arrange for the organization of said conference. Maine, Vermont and Massachusetts have responded to the overtures from Ohio, approving the formation of a stated National Conference, and appointing a committee similar to that of Ohio. Massachusetts was especially emphatic in her action, suggesting the basis of representation; "that the National Conference be held once in two years," and directing her committee to "secure if possible the meeting of such a conference in the early autumn of the ensuing year," but if this be found impracticable, then to arrange "for the meeting of a General Convention of the Congregationalists of the United States, in the month of October next."

Thus the matter now stands: Kansas, Michigan, Illinois, Iowa, Rhode Island and Nebraska have held their annual meeting without action, so far as is known; five States have taken favorable action, and it is to be hoped that the other State organizations yet to meet, will also look favorably upon the movement. The matter will be brought before them by overtures from Ohio, and probably, also, from the committees of the other States which have taken similar action.

It should seem feasible to secure the first meeting of this proposed conference during the autumn of 1871; for, before that time, all the State organizations which have met will have met again, and acted upon the question.

The committees appointed by the several States can arrange the basis of representation for the first conference, either on the plan suggested by Massachusetts, or on some other; and the National Conference itself, at its first meeting, can settle the permanent basis, as well as the laws of its organization, and the rules of its government.

Two things should be guarded carefully in the fundamental

law of said conference. The *first*, without which such a conference cannot live a decade, is the denial in its constitution of "the possession or exercise of any ecclesiastical authority or function whatever." The *second* is, that laymen have equal representation with the clergy in the body. The basis suggested by the Association of Massachusetts, as reported, does not secure this. It is this: "We recommend that the local conferences be the basis of representation; that every local conference shall send one representative *minister*, and that every conference containing twenty-five churches or more, shall send two representatives; and that, in addition, the General Associations and Conferences may have additional representation." This, if we understand it, does not give place enough to the laity. The movement in the kingdom of God seems now to be, the restoration of the brethren to the prominence and efficient co-operation which they held in the primitive churches. God has used the Pilgrims to introduce and foster this restoration; we must complete it. "All ye are brethren," said Christ; and we shall need all the wisdom of the brethren, lay as well as ministerial, in the proposed National Conference. Besides, the history of our churches proves that laymen will be needed in a National Conference, to guard the independence of local churches.

When we shall have finished our work as well as our fathers have finished theirs, the church of Christ will make the New Testament its supreme law in church order, as in faith and practice; return to the principles of autonomy and fellowship on which it was founded, and re-enter upon a career of spiritual conquest which shall end only when the nations have become the inheritance of the Christ. Then the liberty wherewith Christ has set us free, will be the blessed portion of all; and the prayer of the sin-bearing Saviour, "that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou has sent me," will receive its long-deferred but full answer. To have begun this restoration, is the glory of the Pilgrims; to complete it, will be the glory of their spiritual children.

## ARTICLE III.

## A CONGREGATIONAL PHENOMENON.

Of the five leading evangelical denominations in the land, Congregationalists are numerically the smallest, with a single exception. Estimating relative strength by the number of ministers, we find the five to stand thus: Methodists, twenty-six thousand; Baptists, fifteen thousand; Presbyterian, nine thousand; Congregationalists, three thousand; and Episcopalians, something above twenty-five hundred.

It is presumed that the number of communicants, and the various ecclesiastical and evangelizing forces in each of these five Christian bodies, are in about the same proportion. Yet the Congregationalists began to plant their churches in 1620; the Baptists long afterward; the first Presbytery was not formed till 1706; and the Methodists have but recently celebrated their first centennial in America.

The relative strength of the denomination is somewhat inversely, therefore, as their ages. The Congregationalists had primitive possession in all the eastern and vigorously propagating colonies. Education, wealth, civil and social control and influences, were largely with them; and for these reasons one would look to see them obtain ecclesiastical precedence and moulding power in the land. As other influences emigrated from the primitive homes of Congregationalism, and organized new Territories and States in the western march of population, one would naturally look to see the ecclesiastical polity and church forms of the East taking the same precedence and maintaining the same relative predominance. If eastern emigrants and colonists carried westward the civil, educational, moral and social institutions and habits, peculiar to their fathers, and also their broad evangelical creeds, why should they not have carried, at the same time, and in the same proportion, and to the same prominence and places of power, the



church polity of the fathers? Why should it now be the feeblest among even its younger born? This is the Congregational Phenomenon of which we would speak.

Two preliminary remarks should be here made. This inferiority is more numerical than real. Ecclesiastical strength is less concentrated and obvious, and less able to be stated statistically in the Congregational denomination than in any other, because it has scattered its forces with a kind of lavish carelessness beyond the census of ordinary church statistics.

Some of the causes of our relative inferiority are honorable to the body, and would do credit to any branch of Christ's church; while others reveal a carelessness and weakness, and almost moral delinquency, in contrast with which the habits and success of other denominations should become a stimulating reproof. We proceed to speak of some of these causes miscellaneously.

There has been the tacit concession that the New Testament leaves the form of church government unsuggested. So ecclesiastical, like civil organizations, are presumed to be left to the wisdom, ambition, intrigues and abuses of men. But a careful and unbiased reading of the Book of Acts and the Epistles, will suggest strongly to the citizens of a republic that the government of the Apostolic churches was republican in its nature and administration, the power always inhering in the body and not its officials. The brotherhood was the legislative, judicial and executive body. Appeals were to the churches upward, and not upward from them; and their councils were federal and representative bodies, constituted by the brotherhood for specific purpose and time.

From these remarks the Apostles are, of course, excepted — a class of men divinely and specially commissioned, without predecessors or successors.

We have not received and cherished an antecedent presumption that our polity is nearest in kind to that of the Apostles. Overlooking the Book of Acts, that first work on Congregationalism, as "the full corn in the ear," it is not strange that we have lacked seed as well as stimulus in planting churches.



As a natural consequence, a profound indifference to any particular church polity has possessed us, as a body. It has seemed to us a small matter whether the church of God live and be propagated under an oligarchy, a hierarchy, or a democracy. This is the more strange to us, looking at it from our republican stand-point. The very idea that we have been so widely and traditionally indifferent about religious affairs, entered largely into the struggles of our ecclesiastical fathers, in the old country, and into the revolution in civil affairs in this country. Congregationalism, as being simply sacred republicanism, has not been put with sufficient anxiety in its proper place as one of the factors in working out the problem of human rights in America.

Church government, strikingly correspondent to our civil government, should not be left indifferently to succeed or fail. Our civil liberties began in a struggle for religious ones. We should see to it that we do not lose them at the very point where we gained them.

We have not made enough of the republican character and influence of Congregationalism. It is simply republicanism in church affairs. It is the rule of the people. So the civil republic was imported to this country in the religious. The free state in America owes its origin to the free church, and is one of the results of the struggle that Congregationalism made with hierarchy and monarchy. The same forces are needed to save what they gained. Nothing, probably, now endangers our civil liberty more than an ecclesiastical system that is papal from Rome down.

During the Rebellion, the government had less sympathy from that than from any other Christian communion. Especially is a republican church needed in the South to complete its reconstruction. Says a clergyman, some time in the South, and writing us from Fairfax county, Va.:

"Congregationalism is especially needed in the Southern States, and cannot be too highly estimated. Having trampled in the dust individuality in church and state, church organizations, in which each local church shall govern its own affairs, are needed as educational influences. God com-

mands us, by his providence, to engage in setting forth Congregationalism in its republican nature and fruits. The masses at the South must be taught what is genuine republican government."

Those are eminently practical views, from a man long on the ground. The South needs our kind of churches to teach them the principles of a free State, just as our colonial and early churches in New England educated the people up to the Revolution, independence, and the republic.

Congregationalism has not been taught in our theological Seminaries, and preached in our pulpits, and published. Until very lately, church government has hardly found an expositor in our schools of the prophets, and our own system has looked in vain for unfolding and defence. Sermons on it have been very rare, and their publication more so. The marvel is that we know as much as we do of our own polity. What the churches have learned, clergy and lay, they have learned mostly in uncomfortable councils, that were necessitated by ignorance. The majority of our pastors are now well stricken in years before they have learned to call a council regularly, especially if irregularities demand it—moderate it orderly, and conclude it happily. There is gross ignorance, even in New England, of what Congregationalism is, compared with Presbyterianism, or Methodism, or Episcopacy. And it is greatly to the discredit of our Congregational Seminaries and pulpits. The intelligent laity complain of us, and with reason.

We have not published small and popular treatises and manuals on our polity. We have nothing cheap, familiar and comprehensive, to use as a campaign document. Parts of our system are well unfolded, as in Pond, Wellman and Roy, while we are yet waiting for pamphlet affairs that would intelligently lead a new and mixed settlement to our forms of government and to a church organization. It is unfortunate that there have not been floating through the community synopses of our polity and form of church organization and management, with blank forms for councils, etc., that would have filled a dozen pages in all our local church manuals. This cheap information would have saved hundreds of church

quarrels, and planted for us thousands of Congregational churches, where other denominations are now thriving on our contributions. Punchard and Dexter have given us noble volumes. But they are wholesale dealers; we need sadly a retail trade, in little packages to suit customers. Our National Council is yet half a failure, in that a multitude of tracts and booklets, have not sprung from its massive and splendid Reports.

We have, moreover, been beguiled by the assertions, and dictations even, that Congregationalism would not do well out of New England, and in new and mixed communities. This has been said unwisely always, sometimes unkindly, and the saying has been backed by the old argument of kings and popes and bishops, that the people cannot be trusted to govern themselves. This has been a wonder to many, that civil republicanism, self-government, can emigrate, while ecclesiastical cannot; that a community can govern themselves in worldly, but not in spiritual matters. Had it once occurred to send West for a solution, and take the testimony of experience on the ground, the assurance fact would have been exploded. Says a clergyman in McDonough County, Ill.: "Its republican government is adapted to a mixed community." Says another in Lloyd County, Iowa: "I think Congregationalism has advantages over other church systems, in interesting and evangelizing a mixed community." And a pastor in Cedar County, Iowa, gives the reason: "As members of all evangelical churches can unite in forming a Congregational church." A minister in Rock County, Wis., gives an illustration: "Our church has members from the Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Episcopalians, Seventh-Day Baptists, and Catholics; but we have never had any trouble from that source."

Congregationalism can go anywhere in a republic; and when there is no republic, it can create one. The two belong together, as of common parentage.

Again, as human nature now is, the usual self-interest of a denomination is indispensable to the highest economy in

expending Christian charities in the extension of the church. A family feeling and interest are indispensable to the prosperity of a community. Fourierism is a failure financially, because it ignores a first principle in success; namely, personal interest. Ecclesiastical Fourierism is a partial failure in building churches for the same reason. Every builder is constantly saying, "This is not *my* church," and so is economic of his personal strength, and free with the common purse.

Moreover, it is a mistake to evangelize with a liberal indifference to denominations, or in hostility to them, since all the fruits are gathered into denominational store-houses. That union church for which some expend money and time and sympathy so freely, and to whose membership they think their labors are adding so many communicants, is a pure fancy; it is a myth in the past, a cipher now, and a vision in the future. Those earnest opposers of denominationalism, and ardent union workers, who neglect our regular Congregational plans and channels, will find the most of their converts in denominational churches not our own. The bald fact is, there is no church but a denominational one for anybody to join. A contributor and Christian workman is, therefore, shut up to the choice, if he acts intelligently and on a plan, of strengthening the denomination he prefers, or the one he does not prefer.

In this lack of a healthful *esprit du corps*, some have assumed that our mission is to diffuse our denominationalism among the other Christian bodies and liberalize them, rather than centralize and build up ourselves. On this theory we have aided abundantly in founding institutions of learning for other denominations; and we have manned quite extensively their Seminaries, Colleges, pulpits, and editors' chairs.

But we have noticed no perceptible decrease in the denominational spirit thereby. The policy, however, helps to explain their growth above ours, while it stands in strong contrast with their own. A pastor writing us from one of the southern counties of New York, says: "I find that in their Sabbath-schools, their papers and libraries, they make special and perpetual reference to their own tenets and peculiarities." And

properly so, if their peculiarities are worth enough to make a separate denomination. A home missionary in Hardin County, Iowa, writes us as follows: "I know of no Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, Campbellite, Quaker, or other denomination except our own, where any other publications are used than those of their own society." In all this they are perfectly consistent. A man ought to prefer his own denomination to any other, and work for it, or go over to the one he does prefer, and work for it.

We have distrusted the wisdom of such a restricted course. But we see, from these letters, what other denominations think of it. What do our home missionaries think? As being on the ground, and judging from experience, their words should have weight. Says one in Illinois: "I think, for the present juncture, all our books used in our Sabbath-schools, and for distribution, should show their source." Says another in Iowa: "I would like denominational books and tracts to as great an extent as you are able and willing to grant them." And another in Iowa adds: "Give me especially tracts on Congregationalism."

It is true many of our own order have worked on the indifferent and indefinite plan, with the sincere expectation of greater success for the cause of Christ. Border experience corrects this notion. An experienced minister in Ohio says: "Congregationalism means union, having that gravitating force found nowhere else." And one in Wisconsin gives this significant opinion: "I think it to be much easier to start a Congregational prayer-meeting, Sabbath-school or church, in a mixed religious community, than to start any other on union principles."

These allusions to union action with other evangelical denominations, suggest what is, beyond doubt, the leading cause of the very slow growth of Congregationalism, as compared with that of its partners. We have united with them in collecting and distributing Christian charities, and in founding literary institutions, Sabbath-schools and churches; and, generally, we have co-operated in the home missionary field.

New England, the home of Congregationalism, has been a very fruitful field in funds, ministers, and religious writers. This field has been often and faithfully gleaned for union purposes. Our fathers inculcated the idea most thoroughly, that this union policy was the true process of evangelization, and that from our writings, and from the application of our funds, everything peculiar to us, as Congregationalists, must be eliminated. For half a century this policy has been worked very earnestly, during which time the foundations were laid for those comparisons of relative strength with which this article opens.

One fact, as illustrative of this statement, must suffice, though it refers only to a union between us and one other denomination.

No doubt the Plan of Union of 1801 was entered into with the best intentions, and with all the wisdom of that age. No doubt, too, all parties were surprised at the result of a careful examination, as reported by a committee of the Congregational Convention of 1846, assembled at Michigan City, Ind. The committee say of this Plan of Union :

"It has caused some *two thousand* churches, formed by Congregationalists, to be transferred, actually absorbing almost all the domestic evangelical labors of that denomination in Presbyterianism. But for this plan, the institutions of New England would have been spread wherever her sons emigrated ; and in fact New England, in all her liberty and union, would have spread over New York and all the West."

"Some two thousand churches, formed by Congregationalists," absorbed in Presbyterianism during those years. That is, we lost by this "union" action about two-thirds as many churches as we even now possess. This result was natural. The Plan anticipated more than the human nature of two denominations has any right to stipulate. As the family feeling will prove stronger than the neighborly, or state, or national, so the denominational will rise above the universal Christian feeling. It is natural, constitutional, and right. Labor, progress, and noble results, start in this raid of associated personality ; and for this reason, no doubt, God graciously

permits co-working and healthfully competing denominations in his church. The other denominations long since discovered the utility and power of separate action, and their present advanced position shows their wisdom. They have discovered, that with a denominational interest, well infused with the love of Christ's kingdom, they can raise more money, and when raised expend it more economically and fruitfully, than they could in any union organization. Hence, while they would not abruptly leave old union organizations, hallowed by so many ancient and sacred memories, they are leisurely and wisely forming denominational organizations that will supersede them. We congratulate them on their growth, for as between us and them it is simply a distinction of Ephraim or Judah ; we commend them for centralizing their forces for the sake of greater efficiency, and would ourselves study the lesson they have illustrated.

As a result of the extended, patient and sincere efforts of the evangelical denominations for the last half century in organic union work, three things can probably be said with the consent of the other parties, if not of our own also : That separate action serves best to develop and energize all the forces of the church ; secures more real harmony among all the branches of the Christian family ; and by the enterprise and economy that a proper denominational spirit begets, does more to extend the cause of Christ with the same amount of contributions and labors. As the Congregationalists have been the last to see and use these facts, their statistical footings of labor and growth show the least in results.

Testimony to these three facts comes from the western field in great abundance, where, in complex labors, growth and religious organizations, theories have the fairest test. A few quotations from as many different letters from ministers there, taken miscellaneously from a wide correspondence, will shed useful light. On the desirableness and utility of union action in new fields of labor in planting Sabbath-schools and churches, they say :

Michigan : " Generally it is impracticable." " Not desira-



ble, or to any great extent attainable." Iowa: "If you could get the unions." Missouri: "To use a Western phrase, I prefer to work in my own gear. My experience has been that it is not apt to gall." Illinois: "Not desirable, unless the community is small, and likely to continue so." New York: "It is always best, I think, for each to work alone. If each is not strong enough, then let them all unite in some special denominational church." Iowa: "I have not found union, or co-operation with other churches very successful." Pennsylvania: "Our people feel more free to work when not connected with the so-called union church. I think every man's flock does best in his own pasture." Wisconsin: "I think separation in labor best, judging from my experience of nearly fifteen years of Western life." Iowa: "Only in some cases, in the most incipient stages of growth." "Not such unions as involve property."

Our own men, therefore, on the ground, where the union theory must be made practical, if anywhere, coincide with the conclusions and usages of the other denominations, that separate action is the most energetic, harmonious, and fruitful. Correspondence could also be introduced, quite extensively, to show, that in the division of results of union work, the Congregationalists are still receiving in the proportion they enjoyed under the Plan of Union. This is said in no spirit of complaint, much less of reproach. Such unequal dividends are natural and inevitable in a union of church polities for common work. The genius of each polity, the methods of applying it, and the general habits and spirit of the people working under it, are so diverse, that an equation of proceeds in the proportion of investments of funds and labors is simply impossible. Indeed, in some cases the results to a denomination are inversely as its investments.

The disproportionate absorption of our charitable collections in some of our union enterprises explains much of the tardiness and feebleness of our growth. After supplying union treasuries so liberally, we have not been able to honor just calls on our own, and extend the kingdom of Christ according to our preferred forms. Two citations will be sufficient.



With four denominations in the Boston Tract Society, approximate estimates, by its officers, showed that the Congregationalists contributed eight elevenths of the funds. That probably is not above the proportion of our contributions in the so-called union works, basing the estimate on the nominal and numerical constituency.

The Sunday-school Union is doing a large work in collecting and disbursing the charities of the churches. Five denominations are its prominent partners and supporters, of which the Congregationalists are one. The whole collection for it in Massachusetts for the month ending Dec. 15, 1869, was \$737.97, of which the Congregationalists contributed \$625.27, leaving only \$112.70 as contributed by the other four denominations united. For the month ending March 15, 1870, the collections in the same field were \$672.97, of which the Congregationalists contributed the whole. For twenty-four months the Congregationalists in the same State contributed \$6.50 for every dollar that the other four denominations contributed all together. True, the Congregationalists are stronger than either of the other denominations in that State, but not six and a half times as strong as all of them united.

That it may be seen, however, how out of proportion, and with what an unreflecting liberality our charitable funds for extending the church of Christ have been put into undenominational channels, we make this farther statement. For the fiscal year of the Sunday-school Union ending March 1, 1870, the receipts to its missionary fund were about \$119,000, of which about one fourth came from the Congregationalists. If the number of churches in these five denominations in the Union may be regarded the same as the number of ministers, there are about 60,000. Then the average contribution for that year's collection by each church must have been about \$2.00. But as the 3,000 Congregational churches contributed about one fourth of the whole, \$30,000, they must have contributed on an average \$10.00 each, that is, five times as much as the other denominations on the common average.

No reproach, but commendation rather, of other denomina-

tions is implied in these analyses of charities. The other partners, no doubt, see that a better use of their contributions can be made in denominational channels. The analyses are introduced merely to aid in explaining the Congregational phenomenon we are considering. For it is now plain that we cannot do union work with our church extension charities, and at the same time grow as a denomination. Other causes have aided to retard our growth, some of which can be only indicated.

The medium grade and popular element in society have been overlooked in the religious ministrations of our order. Our theological seminaries have taken what might perhaps be called a scholastic, certainly a scholarly pride, in preparing their students for public life. While the culture is not too high, it has not been wisely used to reach the populace. Professor Phelps, of Andover, well says: "A scholarly ministry, taken as a whole, we must confess, is working away from the unscholarly masses of the people." Not less learning, but more adaptation of it, is our necessity for growth among the masses.

We have suffered for the want of national conference, planning and organization. Next to a principle, in real power, is a plan to carry it. We have lacked methods and continental aims worthy the Pilgrim bands and the kingdom of Christ in America. Our sore need for the last century has been National Congregational Councils, to see how best we can do our part for Christ on this continent. Hitherto we have been much like Grant's army in the original recruiting camp, scattered from Maine to Oregon.

That the Congregational polity has vital, elastic and self-propagating elements, is evident from its success in all these unfavorable circumstances. Indeed, a strong evidence of its Apostolic origin is furnished in the fact that it is yet alive and vigorous among us, after so much indifference toward it, neglect, mismanagement and ill treatment.

With all its abundant labors for others, it has done nobly in Massachusetts. In 1831, it had 287 churches in the State,

now 500; an increase of 213. Unitarianism the meanwhile has added less than twenty to the 150 lapsed orthodox societies with which it then began openly. The Baptists, next in strength to the Congregationalists, have only about 40,000 communicants—less than the Congregational increase, 42,567, since 1831.

When it has gone into an open field, as Iowa, its success shows that it is the church for the people. Starting with half a dozen there in 1840, it now numbers 200 or more; but the founders worked with a purpose and on a plan.

Congregationalism has never had a fair treatment at the hands of its nominal friends. It has been the best abused ecclesiastical system in the country. "The more I have studied Puritan history," says Rev. Dr. Baldwin, "the more have I wondered at New England for the readiness with which, in the hope of doing more, on the whole, for the kingdom of Christ, the emigrating sons of the Pilgrims have consented to yield their own forms for those more rigidly insisted on by men who held to a common faith with themselves. Surely I cannot be mistaken in the supposition that it is without parallel in the history of the church."\*

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#### ARTICLE IV.

##### INSPIRATION, UNDER A "MEDIATING VIEW."†

THE modern denial of the inspiration of the Bible differs from the old in spirit, in method, and in result. Paine and his contemporaries attacked it with the war-whoop and the tomahawk of the savage; the disbelief of to-day comes to it as a surgeon comes to a diseased limb on which a patient has

\* Cong. Quarterly, January, 1870.

† ORTHODOXY; ITS TRUTHS AND ERRORS. By James Freeman Clarke. Boston: American Unitarian Association. 1866. Chapter V., "Orthodox Idea of the Inspiration and Authority of the Bible."

been accustomed to walk: because faith in the divine and infallible authority of the Bible is an error, he sets himself, with the regret, but also with the firmness of the surgeon, to the task of removing the venerable mistake from the popular mind. Hence the old disbelief was irreverent and rough; the new is respectful and kind. Agreeing that the idea of plenary inspiration is a ghost which has too long haunted society, the old sought to slay it by giving it hard names; the new crosses itself, and repeats against it the sacred names of science, history, criticism, and even religion itself. The old was careless how men abandoned the Bible, so long as they really flung it aside; the new invites them, with much rhetoric and logic and learning, not to fling it aside, but to put it reverently on the shelf. The old was content with arguing that the current belief in inspiration was not a fair deduction from any premises that could be maintained; the new is very busy with the additional work of pointing out to us what shining bits are worth saving among the wreck of our former hallowed beliefs.

There could hardly be a better illustration of this change in the attitude of disbelief than that which is afforded by Mr. James Freeman Clarke, in his volume on "Orthodoxy; its Truths and Errors." Nothing that has appeared of late so well illustrates at once the methods and the reasons of those who object to the high view current among the so-called "orthodox," and urge us to set our belief a notch or two farther down.

Recognizing, at the outset, that every error, which has vitality and power with men, owes its vitality and power to some truths which are bedded in the error, like gold in the quartz, he lays down as the object of his book to find, amid the errors of Orthodoxy, the truths which have given it its acknowledged tenacity of life and steady increase of power.

With this object in view, he spends his fifth chapter in trying to distinguish in the orthodox idea of inspiration, the truths which have given the Bible such influence over the conduct of men. Naturally, then, his aim is not merely to tear down, but also to build up. He takes pains not simply to show that

the orthodox view is wrong, but to tell us just what is left after the orthodox mistakes are worked out.

In his opening paragraph he says: "We shall consider the conflict of opinion between those who believe in the full inspiration of every word of Scripture, and those who treat it like a common book, and endeavor to see how far we ought to believe a fact or a doctrine because it is asserted, or seems to be asserted, by some writer in the Bible." He then proceeds to define what he thinks are the three main views of the inspiration of the Bible. Between the two extremes stands his own.

Here it is that, while we admire the skill with which Mr. Clarke makes his own school include the largest possible number, we are bound to take exception to the way in which he brings about that result. He puts the lower line of his party so low that it excludes only those who can see no distinction between the inspiration of the Bible and that of Cicero and Gibbon, and consider the authors of the Bible just as liable to mistake as any one else. The upper line of his party, on the other hand, is set so high that only bigots can fail to be included by it. Some of us who have considered ourselves quite orthodox in our views of the Bible, would be surprised to see how unceremoniously Mr. Clarke's definition appropriates us to his side. His definition of plenary inspiration includes several sentences: "Everything in the Bible is the word of God." This is well enough, but vague. "All the canonical books are inspired by God, so as to make them infallible guides to faith and practice." This alone would be a fair definition. He adds, however: "Every word which really belongs to these books is God's truth, and to be received without question as truth, *no matter how much it may seem opposed to reason, to the facts of nature, to common sense and to common morality.*"\* This is one of the gratuitous flings at the Bible, with which Mr. Clarke seeks not only to entrap superficial thinkers into the idea of the absurdity of the current belief, but to prepare them for his so-called "mediatorial view." Now, in the name of common sense, who that has

\* The italics are ours.

learned the first principles of morality, ever attempted to receive the Bible, or any other book, in spite of seeming opposition to other things in which he was bound to believe? Either Mr. Clarke has forgotten fairness in his anxiety to enlarge the bounds of that school of thinkers which has never had reason to boast of its numbers or of its moral increase, or he betrays an astounding ignorance of the sentiments of representative orthodox men. The fact is, that the believer in inspiration comes to the Bible impressed with the evidence of its divine authority and correctness, and therefore expecting to find that, when fairly interpreted, it will agree with reason and a good conscience; no more and no less. The only excuse for Mr. Clarke's fling lies in the fact that, when men have attacked the scientific or historical accuracy of the Bible, and Mr. Clarke and his associates have made haste, as in this chapter, to concede all and more than all that they have claimed, the general voice from the orthodox camp has been that of appeal for a delay in the decision, until science and history should have more thoroughly examined their fields. The wisdom of this course has been attested by the result, in the later evidence, which has been strongly corroborative of the Bible; and yet the man who still believes the Bible to be an authoritative declaration of religious truth, is held up by Mr. Clarke to the contempt of all right-minded men as believing in the Bible, "how ever much it may seem opposed to" the very tests of its own authority.

"This," he says, "is *the orthodox theory* even at the present time. Any variation from this is considered a deviation into heresy." The statement is false. The opinions of certain men here and there may have looked that way, but they have had the sympathy of few.\* If Mr. Clarke will draw his

\* Thus, an English correspondent of one of our religious papers, speaking of the influence of the Broad Church leaders upon the Congregational ministers of England, says of the latter: "Two or three openly teach the people that the ground of belief is not the inherent authority of the Holy Scriptures, but the coincidence of our conscience and reason with what they find there, and they claim to receive or reject the contents of the Bible as

dividing line a long way further down, so as to include among the orthodox all those who receive the religious teaching of the Bible as of divine authority, he will show mercy to a multitude of shivering mortals whom he has turned out of a fold where before they were useful and happy, and who, unexpected and uncomfortable as this new position is, would rather perish in the cold than be numbered in his flock.

Mr. Clarke then goes on to show the difficulties of the orthodox view.

In the first place, geology shows that the earth was not created in six days of twenty-four hours each. That this is now universally acknowledged, Mr. Clarke admits, but admits in such a way that you catch the impression that the doctrine of plenary inspiration has been weakened thereby.

Then he assumes that we have our choice of believing Moses against the geologists, or the geologists against Moses. This is a gratuitous concession. The admission that there is discordance between the record on parchment and the record on stone, is entirely uncalled for as yet. The fact of such discordance has been assumed so much already by preacher and physicist, that now men stand as if in hostile camps, geologists thinking that biblical scholars are dishonest in neglecting scientific discoveries, and biblical scholars thinking men of science unfair in failing to recognize the equally positive facts which support their belief. From the dealing of Chalmers with astronomical discovery, we might have learned a truer and less disastrous way. Can we not wait? Has science made up her record? What more certain once than the thickness of the earth's crust? yet the old beliefs as to this have given way to new. What more hearty once than the agreement as to the enormous period of the earth's history, and the

their 'moral sense' may dictate." Very few among orthodox thinkers would have framed that sentence in just that way. They would rather have implied that conscience and reason, both before and after the contents of the Scriptures are known, indorse its authority to such an extent that they look with confidence to the time when all discrepancies will be reconciled, and all doubts cleared away.



successive and slow formation of her strata? yet we are hearing of new discoveries which make us at least ask whether the geologists will not have to wipe off their slates and sit down to a new calculation. Hugh Miller was not ashamed to bring "the testimony of the rocks" to the defense of Scripture. When Mr. Clarke has persuaded Prof. Dana and Prof. Guyot that the discoveries of geology are finally irreconcilable with the written word, we shall be ready to sit down with him to see what effect the fact ought to have upon our acceptance of the Bible as an authoritative religious guide.

The same reply may be made to Mr. Clarke's objection that ethnological inquiry proves the earth to have been inhabited more than 6,000 years. We can afford to wait. Ethnology is in her very infancy and may yet take back as many of her most confident judgments as her sister science has done.

"The letter of the Bible seems to be at war with the facts of nature," says Mr. Clarke. Very likely, but let us wait and see whether it really is. Some years ago it was announced that more than eighty different theories of the creation, all hostile to the Mosaic account, had been confidently held and finally abandoned. If we have watched the progress of discovery aright, the very sciences which are most quoted against the correctness of Scripture, are the ones which ought to be least dogmatic in their generalizations from the facts they observe.

Yet it ought to be said here that our belief in the higher view of inspiration is not necessarily put at stake on the issue of these questions in science. While we believe the evidence of divine authorship in the Bible to be such that we expect the Bible to gain rather than lose credit by investigation, we consider that evidence to be such that even an unfavorable verdict on these points should not affect our belief in the authority of the Bible as a teacher of religious truth.

What doctrine, however, does Mr. Clarke offer us as containing the scraps of truth which he finds still lying in his alembic after all his most searching tests? He thinks that he has a doctrine which combines all the advantages with none

of the difficulties of the higher view. He wishes to "show that the Bible may be and is authority without being inspired, as regards every page and word, and that inspiration is one thing and infallibility another."

He first describes what is called natural inspiration, by which the poet, the artist, the scholar, and thinker, seize their great ideas. This is the inspiration of Newton, Bacon and Daguerre. This, he says, is the "universal inspiration on which the special inspiration of the Old and New Testament rests." "Christian inspiration is the work of the Holy Spirit on the heart. It is that influence which came to the Apostles and to all Christians after Jesus had left the earth, to unite them inwardly with Christ, and to show them the true Christ." "It is quite certain that all Christians were expected to partake of this Christian inspiration." Among many points of resemblance between the natural and the Christian inspirations, the chief is the combination of "truth of substance with fallibility of statement." The difference is in *substance*, the one bringing truths of the natural order, the other those of a supernatural order; in *source*, the one springing from the world of nature, the other from the inward Christ; and in *method*, the one having that of individual genius, the other that of love or communion. Or, again, the difference between the inspiration of Goethe and that of Paul is not in kind but in degree. That the writers of the Bible were not infallibly protected in their utterance of religious truth, he is careful to aver. They simply had clear views of the truth by the work of the Holy Spirit upon their hearts, and they recorded what they saw, with the same liability to mistake that any other man would have. This is "the mediating view."

It is impossible within the space at our command, to enter with any fullness upon the reasons why this statement does not cover the evidence which points to the divine origin of the Bible.

Mr. Clarke would say that it does cover the evidence from the unparalleled sublimity, purity and truth of the teachings of Scripture. All this he delights to rehearse, while he would

doubtless admit that the life and teachings of the "inspired" Goethe were corrupt and corrupting. He would attribute the difference, however wide you might be pleased to consider it, to the extraordinary degree of the divine influence upon the hearts and minds of the writers of the Bible, and would grant you nothing for your belief that the teaching of the latter was guarded against error; just as the orthodox would not concede the infallibility of Swedenborg or Edward Irving, because of the general excellence of their teaching. Perhaps no more than Mr. Clarke's idea of inspiration can be confidently asserted on these grounds, but we are at least prepared by them to expect other evidence which will prove not only truth of substance but authority of statement.

There is other evidence which Mr. Clarke would find more difficult to reconcile to his theory. We name a few points briefly, dwelling especially upon that which relates to the Old Testament, since he evidently has a poor opinion of that part of the Bible.

1. There is evidence which he has entirely neglected in the divine connection with the Mosaic history.

Mr. Clarke is very careful not to commit himself as to the question whether there is in the Pentateuch the record of a true revelation; although his flings at the Old Testament history are frequent, while his words of respect are rare. Yet the narrative, if only from the descent into Egypt, bears unmistakable evidence of being true in its main features. Concede that, and you concede the fact of an especial and explicit revelation. To name but one point, the existence of monotheism, and especially such pure and exalted monotheism, amid the universal and polluting worship of calves and fishes, and in spite of the relapses of the Hebrews, can be accounted for in no other way, at least by one who believes in the existence of a personal God, than by the theory that the monotheism was expressly revealed and carefully kept alive. It is this great truth, that it contains a divine revelation, which makes the Pentateuch shine out among the sacred books of other nations, like the moon among the stars, where it is glory

enough for a star that it is not utterly put out. It is this that makes it stand upon the horizon of human history like the light of a far-off locomotive, bright amid dense darkness, and the sign of an intelligence that controls events, and is making its way straight toward us. By all odds, the least embarrassing theory as to this story is its historical truth.

Now its central figure is Moses, to whom the authorship is attributed with no fair grounds of contrary belief, and who was the spokesman of God for very many years. Was all this but an anticipation of the Mormon delusion, and was Moses but a Joseph Smith of an earlier day? Mr. Clarke admits that God spoke to men explicitly through Christ. A careful review of the evidence would show him that God spoke to men as distinctly by him who was a type, if not a prophecy, of Christ. Now the bearing of these things is this: that when Moses writes out the history of the events in which he has borne so extraordinary a part, and when he goes back, whether by original composition or by use of the labors of others, to still earlier and even the earliest days, the presumption is that he is just as much authorized to speak as he was when he came down out of Mount Sinai and destroyed the golden calf. The need of authority in the speaker is increased when he records for all coming years. We are bound to believe that he spoke with the same authority until the contrary is proved. Let the exact correctness of the history, the dates, the numbers be disproved, and the presumption in favor of the religious truth remains unchanged.

A more extended examination of these positions would show that they lift the inspiration of the beginning of the Old Testament, which Mr. Clarke so greatly despises, sheer and clear above "the mediating view."

2. Mr. Clarke's view of inspiration also fails to cover the evidence which is afforded by prophecy.

Let him reject, if he chooses, the accounts of the interpretation of dreams, as with Joseph and Daniel; let him deny the truth of the prophecies which were fulfilled at once, as with Jeremiah declaring the death of Hananiah; let him suspend

judgment, if he will, when Amos lays it down as an axiom that the Lord reveals his purposes to the prophets, and Isaiah claims the want of fulfilled prophecy among the heathen as an evidence that their gods are naught; let him stumble, if he must, at the belief universal among the Jews, that their prophecy could and did foretell coming events. He has pushed his way over all these hindrances only to come upon certain declarations of the prophets, which he will find it very hard to account for, except on the ground that they are the result of an impartation of the results of that foreordination and foreknowledge, which are the unshared attributes of Deity. Such is that of Nahum denouncing ruin against Nineveh one hundred years before its fall, and when the appointed agents were by no means equal to the work. Such is Isaiah's prediction that the Assyrian power should be broken in Judea, a prediction that certainly ran thirty years unfulfilled, and then was fulfilled to the letter. Such are the remarkable declarations of Isaiah and Jeremiah concerning Tyre. Such is the prophecy by Moses of the dispersion of the disobedient people, and their preservation in the midst of the nations.

These things can be met with no denial. They were uttered before they were fulfilled, and they were fulfilled with wonderful exactness.

But the most wonderful of all the prophecies are those which promise Christ. The prophecy by type underlies the whole record from the sacrifice of Cain. The prophecy by word is the one sign of hope amid the despair of Eden, and is caught up again and again by the goodly company of the prophets until Malachi—whose very name is a prophecy—closes the triumphant song. Think of what Jacob said of Shiloh, and Moses of a prophet like himself, and David of his Son, and Daniel of one cut off but not for himself—a Son of Man to whom a kingdom is given by the Ancient of Days, and Isaiah of Immanuel, born of a virgin, and of the Man of Sorrows in his fifty-third chapter, and Haggai of the glory of the second temple, and Malachi of the forerunner of the Messiah, and many other prophecies of like kind, and then say, with De

Wette, if we can, that there are no prophecies of Christ in the Old Testament. It seems as if the meaning of such passages could be mistaken only by one who assumes at the outset that the prophecy of anything is impossible. Mr. Clarke is certainly bound to accept them, for one whom he treats as an authorized spokesman for God, took them up and appropriated them all to himself. "Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." (Luke xxiv. 27.)

Granted then the fact of true prophecy, its bearing is plain. The presumption is, that the utterers of these communications from God uttered them with divine direction, for the correctness not only of the prophecy but of the setting that connects them. We are bound to believe this till the contrary is proved.

It is hard to say what the "mediating view" would have us believe as to the inspiration of the prophecies which run through the Old Testament like a golden thread, for Mr. Clarke seems to have been very careful to avoid the theme. But it is plain that they ought to force him to a higher or to a lower view. If the Old Testament writers foretold truly, they spoke by an inspiration higher than any which the "mediating view" can ever be stretched to admit. If they were mistaken, if the testimony of Jesus is not the spirit of prophecy, then Christ, who indorsed them as true, and especially claimed their declarations as prophecies of himself, at least made a gross mistake, and Mr. Clarke must surrender his cherished faith in him as a correct religious teacher. The dilemma is clear. Mr. Clarke's doctrine of inspiration is too low, or his doctrine of Christ too high.

It would be especially interesting to know what Mr. Clarke would do with the Scriptural assertions of the prophetic truth of the words of Balaam and Caiaphas. Were they true prophecies? What becomes, then, of the "mediating view?" for the words of these bad men are certainly not the result of "an inward revealing of Christ." Were they only fortunate guesses? Where, then, shall we stop, if we begin to correct

the statements of the Bible in such a wholesale way? If inspired men are, as Mr. Clarke thinks, "men who have been into spiritual regions where most men have not gone, and seen what most men have not seen," it is a curious question by what name shall we describe Daniel's state of mind when he declared, as from God, things which, nevertheless, he said he did not understand. (xii. 8.)

Mr. Clarke complains that the reasonings of the orthodox on inspiration have too little regard for facts. We commend to his study the facts of the fulfillment of prophecies understood and not understood, uttered by good men and bad. The higher view may not be easily reconciled to the details of the Old Testament; the "mediating view" is irreconcilable with its most important truths.

3. Further, Mr. Clarke's view of inspiration fails to meet the evidence from the indorsement given to the Old Testament by Christ and his apostles.

We are arguing on the common ground that Christ knew the truth of what he said. The presumption is overwhelming that the apostles had caught from him definite ideas as to what he thought on this point.

Now Christ, besides quoting the prophets with the utmost deference, seems to take pains to retain the whole Hebrew canon in the affections of the Jews. This is not politic concession to error; we cannot conceive of Christ as going so far in such concession as to say, "the Scriptures cannot be broken." So the apostles are careful to follow in his steps. In 2 Pet. i. 21, we have a passage which asserts that the prophets spoke by the suggestion of the Holy Ghost. Mr. Clarke takes pains to say that this was inspiration according to the "mediating view;" but if he would quote the whole verse, he would see that it is nothing less than an indorsement of the divine authority of the words of the prophets: "The prophecy came not in old time by the will of men, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." This is not simply "an inward revealing of Christ."

So Paul says (2 Tim. iii. 16), "All Scripture is given by



inspiration of God." Mr. Clarke meets this by saying that it means that "all the writings of every age, which are looked upon as Scriptures, which men from age to age reverence and honor as such, were *not* of man's invention, not of man's device, but came from some irrepressible influence acting on the soul from within." This is as absurd in theory as it is false in fact. If Paul did not mean here simply and only the Hebrew canon, the sacred Scriptures which Timothy had known from a child, and which were able to make him wise unto salvation through faith in the Christ who is their central point, we do not know what he did mean. But, says Mr. Clarke, Paul meant that these books were so inspired that they were "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," and so, he says from careful perusal, the sacred books of all nations are. It is enough to say that Timothy must have understood Paul as giving his indorsement to the current belief in the divine authority of the only Scriptures with which the Jews had any acquaintance.

But, says Mr. Clarke, it is arguing in a circle to quote the Bible as proving the Bible inspired. Our argument starts from the acknowledged authority of Christ. We quote Paul simply as one who knew the mind of Christ as to the authority of the sacred records. The assertion of Paul as to his own inspiration would be a very different thing.

It is not denied that objections may be found in abundance against this higher view of the authority of the Old Testament, but they are not of the radical character which belongs to the reasons which support it. It is believed that they can all be disposed of with honesty, and yet leave us bound to believe all that the Old Testament has attempted to teach.

4. As to the New Testament, it is enough to say that Mr. Clarke's view of inspiration does not satisfy the evidence from the promises made by Christ to his apostles. These are promises of extraordinary help. Mr. Clarke claims them as the promises which were fulfilled at Pentecost and in the composition of the New Testament, and are still finding fulfillment in everything which the indwelling Spirit prompts. They

certainly argue something higher than anything which would leave them liable to material error in what they were about to say. They are directed to disregard the first principles of prudence when the preaching of Christ brings them before the civil or religious power, because it will not be they that speak, but the Spirit of their Father speaking in them. "The Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say." "It is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost." This is extraordinary language, and, when compared with the other language of Christ concerning the work of the Holy Ghost, teaches us to look to the apostles, not simply for "an inward revelation of Christ," but for authority from God in their words. Are we to suppose that they would be guarded in their utterance before tribunals and not guarded in those records which were to be the oracles of the church while the world should stand?

In accordance with these promises the apostles, including Paul, by an especial revelation, speak of themselves in a way that is hard to reconcile with the "mediating view;" they refer to their own and to one another's words as of equal authority with the Old Testament, and of final authority on every point. Even in the familiar passage in 1st Cor. vii., where Paul on some points concerning marriage disclaims divine authority,\* we see thrown out thereby into the sharper outline the fact that he assumes that authority everywhere else. Christ left these men with no provision for a record of his work and doctrine; almost his last words were: "O fools and slow of heart," and yet after Pentecost they went abroad making the most confident assertions concerning doctrines into which no human eye can pierce, and concerning which no apostolic tongue would ever have dared to speak, unless with the profound conviction that in speaking the things freely given us of God, they spoke not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

There is thus a certain unconscious testimony of the New

\* We do not so understand it.—Eds.

Testament to the truth of the statements which it makes, and to the divine authenticity of the doctrines it sets forth. It is not easy to put this testimony into words, but all who have been reverent pupils of the apostles must have felt it in some degree. It is like that self-evidencing power, that atmosphere of truth, which surrounds the Lord Jesus Christ, and which has therefore kept thousands, who have stumbled upon particular doctrines, unflinchingly faithful to Him as a Redeemer and Master and Friend.

The considerations thus given in outline, show how far Mr. Clarke is from the truth when he says: "The orthodox theory rests on few facts, but is mainly an assumption. It seemed necessary that there should be *authority* somewhere, and when Protestants rejected the authority of the church, they took the Bible in its place." A fair tracing out of the reasons already given, and of others which might be named, will show that the divine element in the preparation of the Bible is altogether too great to be covered by the "mediating view." It is easy to gather objections such as abound in this chapter of Mr. Clarke's, but we have as yet seen nothing which in all candor seemed to shake our belief in the higher view. Traces of a human element abound on every page, but with them are now the traces and now the broad marks of the Spirit of God making the inspiration something more than an elevation of the intuitional consciousness. This does not require us to see in Job and Ecclesiastes anything more than the struggles of a skepticism which comes to repose at last upon the holiness and fatherhood of God. It does not require us to see in the Song of Solomon anything more than a poem illustrating the history and sentiment of its day. But it does require us, and, what is more to the purpose, it gives us the right, the much needed right, to go to the Bible as an authority whose teachings, under the interpretation of a reason that walks humbly, and a conscience that is guarded lest even a sand-grain mar the vision of that very eye of the soul, may be accepted as the very word of God.

Had not our proper limits already been transgressed, it

would be easy to show how Mr. Clarke's view, which at first sight is almost as good as the one which he attacks, would prove, were we to lean upon it, but a broken reed. Even with a belief in the infallible authority of the Bible, the unlearned and unstable wrest its words to their own destruction; can Mr. Clarke tell us how much more this would be done if men could say with him that the Bible "combines truth of substance with fallibility of statement," and add, as they certainly would, that in the troublesome point the writer misunderstood the meaning of Christ? Just at the most trying moment, when we most need a "Thus saith the Lord," we are flung back upon the uncertainties of human reasonings upon things with which it knows not how to deal, we are bewildered with the whispers of doubt, or swept away by the strong affirmations of sin. No such doctrine as the "mediating view" of inspiration can sustain the soul when it is beset by its bitterest foes. We need authority, as Mr. Clarke confesses; there is no sustaining authority in that which he offers us as a substitute for the old and tested beliefs.

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## ARTICLE V.

### IS CHRISTIANITY ON THE WANE?\*

THIS work has been already noticed in the REVIEW, but we are glad again to call attention to its solid merits, presenting as it does the results of some of our best American thinking upon the topics taken up. The wish has, however, been frequently expressed that in this, the first of the series, there might have been something more directly grappling with certain phases and pretensions of unbelief which just now manifest themselves in the very region of the "Boston" Lectures.

\* BOSTON LECTURES. 1870. CHRISTIANITY AND SKEPTICISM. Boston. Congregational Publishing Society.

And we share in the hope that, in the next course, the popular want will be somewhat more fully met. Meantime, we trust it will be no presumption on our part if we avail ourselves of the appearance of these Lectures as an excuse for the presentation of a topic connected with Christianity and skepticism which is often alluded to, and not often taken up with any great degree of fullness. Those who attend upon the gatherings of skeptics, or who read their writings, or who converse with them, become familiar with certain assumptions to the effect that the Christian church has lost its power, and that in these very days it is decaying. Is this true?

It is often remarked that it is not now the time to write the history of the age in which we live. It is so difficult to get at all the facts needed, and to classify new facts whose meaning is not yet apparent, and so difficult to avoid all prejudice in view of that which is transpiring around us, that we do not upbraid men if they make mistakes in their grand generalizations concerning current history. Perhaps the most that can be done is to furnish material for future students. So, one distinguished historian has told us that it is difficult to tell the direction in which God's hand is moving in history, while we are just now under its shadow. We might, therefore, suitably waive an inquiry into the comparative progress of skepticism and Christianity in the present age, calling the attention of our amiable foes to the fact that it is now too soon to make exact statements, and that their boasting of the progress of skepticism may, in view of all the facts that are transpiring in this age, prove to be ill-founded. And another difficulty arises from the fact that we are so absorbed, each in our peculiar and perhaps petty round of work, as to find it nearly impossible to watch the movements of men all over the globe; so that we may in our narrowness err, and declare that all the world is just now running out of Christian churches, or running into them; whereas, the truth would require us to state that this running out or in happens in our own locality, while the world at large is going the other way.

But if it be possible for a moment to divest ourselves of local

prejudices, and gather up some of the materials of history in the current life of the world, we may perhaps be able, with some degree of accuracy, so to state the signs of the times as to show whether, upon the whole, throughout the world, in this age, Christianity or skepticism is making the most progress. But when we consider the difficulty of obtaining clear and unquestionable facts enough to warrant forming a careful judgment, we ought to enter upon the inquiry with only a moderate expectation of arriving at the most satisfactory results.

The period of the American and of the great French Revolution may be taken as the beginning of a new era in the world, through which we are now passing. The tremendous political agitations of all civilized nations, breaking up an old order of things and essentially modifying the condition of all the populations; the amazing activity of an irreligious sentiment, by which multitudes cast off the faith of the Christian church in France, England, Germany and America; and the reaction by which Christianity has entered upon a more remarkable career than ever hertofore, upon the continent of Europe and Great Britain, and on this side the sea; the rise of great movements, such as the world never saw before, for diffusing the principles of Christianity and all its blessings among all peoples—these are some of the characteristics of the present age of the world; though there are still some men who are deaf to these sounds of moving Christian hosts, who are so absorbed in listening to the din of common business, or the whisperings of a skeptical philosophy, that they have no ear for the music of angels and the triumphant singing of the whole Christian church.

It is indeed true that some skeptics, advancing under a religious name, are now doing what has not been done before—claiming all the unregenerate as belonging to their phase of faith, or faithlessness; nominal skepticism thus increasing, not by the progress of the principles of unbelief, but by the adoption of the unrenewed masses, who still hold what they have held heretofore. The unregenerate element in society has been thus recently called upon to array itself freely under a religious

name antagonistic to the commonly received Christianity, and at the same time an affinity has been discovered between unregenerate human nature in Christian and in pagan lands; so that, with some show of fairness, it has been claimed that skepticism has greatly grown in modern days. And in connection with this, we find some of the prevailing superstitions of China and Africa reproduced in civilized society, and wizards that peep and mutter are accepted with their tables of moral law. But the sound from these tables, or the roll-call of unbelievers, by no means makes so great a din as the ringing of hammers in building new churches, and the noise of the axe in destroying idol temples, which is now heard throughout the world.

Let us inquire a little, whether there is reason to suppose that Christianity is taking steps backward. This cannot be certainly told by looking at America; for what is America? The country into which Europe is pouring men by the million. So vast has been the emigration of merely nominal Christians, that it were no wonder if, in this country, vital Christianity should fail to maintain itself in proportion to the whole population.

How about attendance upon religious services? That careful philosopher who has so much observation of what is going on in the world as to refer people to the conduct of their own neighbors for evidence to enforce the denial of human sinfulness, states, that "startling statistics" show that, in Europe and America, "the whole population is leaving off going to church." Another eloquent opponent of our faith declares that there is an "alarming falling off from faith, and indifference to the church, and abandonment of its worship;" and that "Christian institutions, the Sabbath and the Bible, are rapidly losing their hold upon the faith of the thinking classes." And have we not been told that there is "a whole population out in search for a religion?" But the simple fact is, that the whole population never went to church. Paganism is of old; the home heathen and the foreign heathen, unregenerate men, have never been fond of going into Christian churches. This



indifference is no new thing; total depravity is of long standing. The mere fact that a few enterprising Christians are taking a town for statistics, and are now counting up the neglectors of church service, does not prove that fewer people go to church than formerly. If that thing is to be proved, some one must hunt up full data of the statistics of former times, and show that the population of the world did once go to church more than now; and until this is done, we may state, without fear of authoritative contradiction, that it is an error to suppose that these neglectors were ever in the sanctuary. It is startling that they never go, but it is startling that they never did; it is startling that the old paganism has never been fully broken up. In nominally Christian communities, there has always been a great deal of practical atheism, a multitude of men living without God in the world; and there is no reason to suppose that the class is more numerous now, in proportion to the population of Christendom, than in former times. The history of the papacy shows that in the old generations there was often a shocking neglect of religious services by a great part of the common people. And a careful observer of the customs of the heathen must know that literally the whole pagan population is frequently not better represented at their religious services than is our nominally Christian population in our Christian services.

And besides the religious indifference which operates alike upon all the race, in keeping people out of church, it is to be remembered that, as a matter of fact, it is not very convenient for all mankind to go to meeting at once. Domestic arrangements hinder it. The very old and the very young, and the great population of invalids, and an immense throng who day by day care for the helpless—these, who compose very nearly one-half the population of the globe, cannot go to church upon a given Sabbath, even though churches are at their doors.

The congregation in any Christian church on a given Sabbath does not really represent more than one-half, and in many instances not more than one-third, of those who are to be reckoned as belonging to that particular congregation. In

the Massachusetts Home Evangelization Report for 1869, we find that of 22,916 Evangelical church-goers in fourteen towns of Norfolk county, the fair-day attendance was 11,621, and the average attendance 9,136. And in a table of five groups of towns, in different parts of the state, the Evangelical church-goers numbered 31,281; of whom 17,340 were to be found in church on a fair day, while the average attendance was 12,467. In country parishes, where many of the people are distant from church, taking the Sabbaths fair and foul, the congregation does not really represent much more than one-third of the persons who are to be reckoned as belonging to that congregation. This is the judgment of persons who have carefully taken notes of many country towns besides those enumerated in the above tables. The church goers are therefore much more numerous than has been supposed by some who have made hasty ill-judged estimates of the proportion of the neglectors to the whole population. The proportion of neglectors in large communities is greater than in the rural districts, since vice largely centres in cities. Probably not more than from 17 to 33 per cent. of the population of New England communities are total neglectors of Christian worship. This will appear from the Fourth Annual Report of the Massachusetts State Committee on Home Evangelization, published in the minutes of the General Association for 1869, pp. 28 and 30:

“According to the tables published in 1866, in twenty-one towns in various parts of the State, the neglectors (including irregular attendants) were 36 per cent. of the population; in the Plymouth Conference, 33 per cent.; in the Franklin Conference, 31 per cent., and on Cape Cod, 11½ per cent. Recent investigations indicate that in the Worcester North Conference they number about 33; in Essex South, (including large towns where Unitarianism and Universalism have prevailed,) 39; in six specimen towns of the Worcester Central Conference, 19½, and in the whole Conference, including the city of Worcester, estimated, 20 per cent.; in a portion of Franklin Conference, 31. But the most careful examination was made within the bounds of the Norfolk Conference,” in which it appears that “the Protestant neglectors of both classes—that

is, those who are wholly neglectful and those of uncertain habit—amount to 26 per cent., slightly over one-fourth of the total population. We do not accurately know the number of Romish neglectors, but they are probably somewhat more numerous, in proportion, than among the Protestants—the number of Romanists of quite irregular attendance being apparently large. It is not unlikely that, taking the whole population together, the number of persons who must be counted as wholly, or in a large degree, neglectful of the sanctuary, is over one-third of the population. The present returns put it at more than 36 per cent.” And upon page 46 of the Report we find five groups of towns, twenty-seven country towns and one city, with a total population of 71,863, in which the neglectors are only 24 per cent. of the whole population.

Now, it has not yet been proved that this state of things is worse than formerly, if we take into account the disturbing elements which enter into the problem. In early New England there were reasons, not now existing, which may have led some people to go to church who would not otherwise have gone; and these must be considered if we will form a correct estimate in regard to any falling off from church going which may be alleged to have taken place. If unwilling people in colonial times went to church because they were compelled by law, it is not any fault or failure of Christianity if, upon the repeal of the foolish law, more of the unwilling now stay at home than once dared to lest their feet should be placed in the stocks. And if, in former times, some of the people went to church mainly for an intellectual stimulus and a social enjoyment which they could not then get elsewhere, it is not to be wondered at, that in these times of an active press and vast social agitation, this class of church-goers has in part fallen off. But this can be no sign that Christianity is losing its power, since it never had any hold on these people. And if in the olden time some of the people went to church, as it is asserted by the old ministers, so as to have an excuse to enter the flip-house, which stood near by, and if this class of people have since then become neglectors of the sanctuary, it is not because Christianity is losing its power over them, but because it is more handy

to get flip elsewhere. In the absence of accurate statistics, an exaggerated notion has doubtless been formed concerning the church attendance in former times; but the most careful examination will probably warrant the statement, that as many people in proportion to the whole population go to the religious services in New England now as ever did go, if we leave out of account the earliest years, in which the proportion of Christian people to the population was somewhat larger than now; and if we leave out of account those who went to church to avoid stocks and fines, and if we leave out those who went mainly for an intellectual and a social or convivial diversion, which they can now obtain elsewhere. And it is unquestionably safe to say that, when we consider the number of religious services our churches now hold each Sabbath during the week, the like of which was utterly unknown to our fathers, the attendance upon such services is very far in advance of anything that has heretofore been known in our history. And, if we reflect upon the competition of other gatherings of various sorts, which, in these busy times, tend to call people away from religious meetings, it is safe to say that Christianity exerts a greater power in drawing people to Zion's assemblies than ever before.

Moreover, if there are single communities in which Christianity has seemed to lose its power over the people, it is not unfrequently found that these losses have occurred in connection with an unchristian doctrinal teaching, which has tended to destroy men's sense of sin, and which bids them rely upon the promptings of an unregenerate heart for religious guidance.

We can never for a moment forget that we have to do with a sinning race; and we may, therefore, never wonder at the humiliating facts which reveal to us the essentially barbaric features which still characterize a part of the operations of unrenewed men in all our communities. But we are cheerfully to remember that Christianity is at this moment grappling with the wrongs that infest society with more vigor than ever; and that, among other hopeful signs of the times, the Christian

church is now numbering those who neglect the sanctuary and are going out into highway and hedge, to compel them to come in, that the Lord's house may be filled.

And in this connection, it is suitable to remember the wonderful Christian power which is implied when we count up the millions who crowd into the sanctuary every Sabbath. At the rate in New England, there would be at the very least twenty-five or thirty millions of the people of the United States who frequently attend church; and, after making every possible concession demanded, there must be, at the very least, fifteen millions of church-goers. Without doubt, eight or ten millions of our people may be found in church on any given Sabbath; and by no figuring of the wildest skepticism can it appear that less than five or six millions are within the walls of our Christian churches upon a Sabbath; while those who do not attend are in part kept away through dire necessity, and only a fraction through deliberate purpose. And it can never for a moment be said that the great mass of those who choose to absent themselves from the sanctuary are by any means the leading moral power in this nation. Common observation, in all our communities, throughout the whole country, makes it safe to say, that the commercial, social, political, intellectual and moral power of the nation, abides with the people who seek to honor God in his house upon the first day of the week. And those who are acquainted with the full meaning of this fact will not be ready to believe that the people of the United States are leaving off going to church.

And if, in this connection, we inquire whether skepticism furnishes anything to the people which takes the place of the religious services of the Christian church, we find only a minute fraction of those who do not attend Christian churches attending upon any exercises which will give them great moral force in the nation. Mere religious indifference is not power, and it must steadily diminish before the practically united and well-directed efforts of the earnest Christian men and women who, in such amazing numbers, go, Sabbath after Sabbath, into the house of God, to gain power from on High.

In regard to the world at large, we have no statistics of the relative proportion of Christian congregations to the population of the globe in past ages, so that it is impossible for any man to show that fewer people, in proportion to the population, attend upon Christian churches now than in any former period. But, upon the other hand, the steady gain of at least nominal Christianity in the world is admitted even by its enemies. This growth has been open and acknowledged, and it cannot be said that it has been checked within the last half century of unequalled missionary activity. We have, then, reason to suppose that, in proportion to the world's inhabitants, the populations which now gather every week under the Christian name are more numerous than ever before, and that if the whole population is out in search for a religion, it is the Christian religion that they are seeking.

But is it not true that there are fewer members of Christian churches, in proportion to the population, than formerly? No one doubts that nominal Christianity is not losing ground. And supposing it were true that the growth of vital Christianity in the world had not kept pace with the world's growth in population, it might be a sufficient answer to show that, after the very first ages, the Biblical Christianity has not been permitted to work till within these three hundred years, and that with the difficulties to contend with in getting the Biblical method again under way, no one need wonder if spiritual Christianity has not yet made great conquests. Still, it may appear that there has been a steady advancement in these conquests, taking into view the Christian work throughout the world. And it would be no argument against the progress of the most vital Christianity in the world, if it should appear that, in the United States, or in some single section of it, there are fewer members of Christian churches in proportion to the whole population, than at former periods of our brief history, since there are some disturbing elements to be taken into account. For example, a great proportion of the early settlers, in some parts of the country, particularly New England, were church members; but this state of things was soon changed by

immigration, in which the irreligious element was much greater than at first. And the immigration has been so great at different times that it would not be strange if the church members had decreased in proportion to the whole population. And, again, the records of former times are so imperfect that we find it very difficult to form a correct judgment in regard to the real growth of the church in proportion to the population. Professor H. B. Smith, who has paid considerable attention to the matter, reckons it perfectly safe to say that, at the very lowest estimate, the growth of the church has kept pace with the growth in population. But he also gives figures, by which it would appear that the church has, for a part of the recent history of the country, increased much more rapidly than the population. And this estimate accords with other statements which have been not unfrequently made. For example, a table has been published several times, upon authority which we do not know to be perfectly trustworthy, but which has not been seriously called in question, to the effect that, in the year 1775, there was only one church member to every sixteen of the population of the country, and that the condition was still worse after the Revolution; but after the Second War was fairly over, the case improved so that, in 1822, the proportion was one church member to every fourteen of the population; while, in 1860, there was one church member to every six of the population of the whole country.

Dr. Samuel Osgood, of New York, in a sermon preached in the Church of the Messiah, April 2, 1868, has calculated that, during the time in which the population has increased six-fold, the church membership has increased fourteen-fold. He reckons the church members in 1800 as one to every fifteen; and, in 1860, one to every six of the population. The figures vary somewhat under the hands of different men; but it seems well established that, while the very first years of New England showed a large proportion of church members in the population, other parts of the country, at that time, did not show so many; and New England itself, and the country at large, in the years immediately following, never had so many;



and, for the greater part of the period of American history, the number of church members in the whole country was never so great as now. Aside from the estimates that have been made concerning the number of church members in proportion to the population before the beginning of the present century, we have other facts indicating the low state of Christianity in the land at that period, which lead us to give credit to statements like that of Dr. Osgood. We think no one, who examines the question with any considerable care, will doubt the vast increase of the church members in proportion to the population within fifty years past. It is difficult to make any accurate estimate, and the facts relating to the early churches cannot easily be reached, and any statements concerning the years long past will necessarily be received with some questioning; but it must, at least, be granted, that those who have given attention to the matter think a very strong case made out, establishing the fact that the church members have multiplied much more rapidly than the population; and it is impossible to prove that they are mistaken. In the absence of proof to the contrary, we may then be allowed to give some credit to these statements of the extraordinary growth of the church membership in proportion to the population.\*

In the very first years of New England, there was a brief period in which the church members numbered one-third of the population; but, taking all the colonies, and the later history, it seems to be well established that the proportion of church members reached at least as low a point as one to every fifteen of the people; and this low state, or some such low

\*It is not unworthy of note, in this connection, that one of the documents in the first annual report of the Free Religious Association, comes to the conclusion that the church members are perceptibly increasing in these decades in which we live; the estimate being (page 56) that, counting together the Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Free Will Baptists, and Unitarians, there has been an increase, between the years 1850 and 1860, five per cent. greater than the increase of the population; the increase, however, being on the part of the Methodists and the Episcopalians, all the rest falling slightly behind, and the Unitarians thirty and one-half per cent. less than the increase of population.

state, seems to have prevailed throughout a great extent of our country during the larger part of our history, from soon after the close of the great immigration which settled the land, till after the beginning of the present century. But this century has brought a change, the proportion of church members increasing so that, since 1850, the number has been from one-seventh to one-fifth of the population; some of the calculations taking into account elements left out by others, and some reckoning only the adult population. According to our figuring, the proportion in 1860 was one church member to every six and five-tenths persons in the whole census. And when we consider the immense tide of immigration of merely nominal Christians in the face of which this growth has been made, and when we consider that this proportion holds good throughout the whole country, we think the sons of the Pilgrims have done as well as their ancestors, who had so great a proportion of church members by planting a Christian colony, but whose proportion was overcome by the in-rush of unchristian people from beyond sea. And let it be remembered that, while at one time a third of the New Englanders belonged to the churches, the other colonies then planted were more wicked, particularly Virginia. We doubt whether, at that time, taking all the settlements, the proportion of church members was so great as one-seventh of the population. It is probable that, at this very hour, there are more Christian people in the land, in proportion to the inhabitants, than there have ever been before, not even excepting the famous days of Puritan piety. Nor can it be said that the children are less firm in the faith than their ancestors, since twenty-five twenty-sixths of the church members of the United States are of churches usually termed evangelical; while, in regard to their character and works, we may more suitably inquire hereafter.

Leaving now the state of the nation at large, we may ask concerning New England, the seed plot of Puritan, and also of "liberal" Christianity, and some of the forms of skepticism. Here a part of the native population has been moving westward, and has been replaced by foreigners of another

religious faith, or no faith. If the Christian army in New England has decreased, it is not because it is becoming extinct, but it has gone forward to possess new countries. Yet it ought not to be hastily admitted that the New England churches are diminishing in proportion to the population. While the facts are not easily obtained, when they are obtained they give us much reason to believe that many of our country communities are far better off than a hundred years ago. For example, in one of the rural towns of Western Massachusetts,\* it appears that while the population increased four-fold within a century, the church members increased ten-fold. And this is a specimen of a class of facts easily multiplied, and which may be fairly adduced to offset those cases of towns where it is claimed that the result has been less favorable to Christianity. In many of the New England towns the population has decreased, or increased by foreign born people; but even in such communities, the local churches have indicated a surprising vigor in keeping up their membership. In every town disturbing influences have worked; but where the way has been clear it is certain that Christianity has asserted its power; and where the way has not been clear, it is none the less certain that the churches have evinced great power in grappling with difficult circumstances, in substantially holding their own or making open gains. This is apparent in the statistics of large communities. In the year 1830, there was in the state of Maine one Congregational church member to every forty-three and six-tenths of the inhabitants; but in the year 1860, one to every thirty-two and five-tenths. And while the other Evangelical denominations in that state have not proved so vigorous as the Congregationalists, yet there has been a decided gain. In 1830, one person out of every nine and five-tenths was a member of an Evangelical church; in 1860, one person out of every eight and one-tenth. And if the estimate could run back to the beginning of the century, the return would be much more favorable. There is no reason to question the accuracy of the statement made by what should be

\* Centennial Address at Conway, by Rev. C. B. Rice, 1867.

deemed excellent authority—Lawrence's History of the New Hampshire Churches—that in the Granite State the year 1800 showed one Congregational church member to every thirty of the population, while in 1850, the proportion was one to seventeen. And the church members of all Evangelical denominations, in 1800, were as one to every twenty-three of the population of the state, but in 1850, one to every eight. The sensible men of New England are calmly and quietly gathering to the support of the Christian churches. It is to be observed that it is very difficult to obtain the statistics of the churches as they were from thirty to fifty years ago; but where they can be obtained, the result is favorable. We may therefore, in absence of proof to the contrary, suppose that if we could get more figures, we should find the results still more favorable. While then, in the first part of this section of our argument, we conclude that in the country at large the church members have very greatly increased in proportion to the population, we now find New England, in spite of skepticism and the change of population, furnishing no exception to the rule.

As another index of the true state of the case, our college catalogues may be consulted. The New England Secretary of the American Education Society tells us that there has been a steady increase in the proportion of the professors of religion in our colleges; that during the early part of the present century, the Christian students were few, and fifteen years ago, one-third of the whole number were professors of religion, but now the proportion is approaching an average of one-half. In 1867, thirty-eight colleges reported 47 per cent. of the under-graduates as professors of religion. In 1868 the thirty colleges which reported gave 68 per cent. church members.

The more this subject is investigated, the more reason there is to believe that there is absolutely no ground for supposing that the church worship is falling off in proportion to the whole population of the United States, or among the more intelligent part of the people; but if we reckon by the scores of years, there is the most decided gain to Christianity.

And if it were now in place to consider the growth of Christianity in other lands, we should find men all over the globe enrolling themselves in the ranks of the Christian church.

We have inquired as to the increase of church members in their relation to the whole population; we now ask as to the relative increase of the number of churches. In 1760, Dr. Stiles reckoned 530 Congregational churches in New England, in a population of half a million; and he also gives the proportion of the Congregationalists, Baptists and Episcopalians, in the population. And if the two latter had as many churches in proportion to their members as the former had, there were 572 churches for the population; that is, one church for every 874 inhabitants in New England, in the year 1760. We find, however, that in 1860 the population of New England had increased seven-fold, and the Evangelical churches seven and forty-five-hundredths fold. Notwithstanding the immense immigration from New England to the West, and the foreign immigration, and the rise of other forms of faith, Christianity has more than held its own in respect to the number of Evangelical churches in proportion to the people. But if we inquire into the number of churches in the whole thirteen colonies at the beginning of the Revolution, we find the proportion to be only one church to every 1,300 or 1,500 people, varying according to the various figures that have come down to us. According, however, to Dr. Osgood, in the sermon we have already quoted, there was, in 1860, one church to every 581 of the inhabitants, making the whole country one-half better supplied than New England in 1760. And in this increase of churches the so-called Evangelical churches have made great proportionate increase. The churches in Massachusetts which joined issue with the common faith technically called Orthodox, have, in the twenty-four years, 1832-1866, according to Dr. Tarbox, increased only two, while the Evangelical churches of the state have increased 429; and in Boston, while the one form of faith has added seven, the other has added thirty-eight churches. According to Rev. D. P. Noyes, in the year 1826 there was one Orthodox church in Boston to every 4,000

inhabitants, now one to every 2,000; and in 1867 the Unitarian churches of Boston, in their numerical relation to the Evangelical, stood only one-third so well as fifty years before. And outside of Massachusetts, while a "liberal" Christianity has planted a little more than a hundred churches since 1832, the Trinitarian Congregationalists have planted nearly fifteen hundred. These figures do not show that Christianity, as we hold it, is relatively losing its power. And in respect to the number of churches in the whole country, it can hardly be said that Christianity is falling into decay among us so long as more than a hundred million dollars are invested in church buildings in the United States, and a single denomination, during last year, built three and a half meeting houses every day.

If, now, we pass from the churches, to take a census of the Christian ministers, we find the figures still more favorable. It is true that, in the very early history of New England, there were more ministers and more liberally educated men in proportion to the population than there has been at any time since—men driven into the wilderness by persecution; but there was subsequently a great falling off in the number, so that, at the beginning of the American Revolution, there was only one minister to every 1,700, or 2,000, or 2,500 of the population, according to different estimates; a difference in the reckoning which shows how difficult it is to get the true statistics, but an agreement in representing the ministers of the gospel as few in proportion to the population. But there is now, at the least, one minister for every 850 of the whole population of the United States. Dr. Baird and other authorities agree that, in recent years, the number of Christian ministers, in proportion to the inhabitants of the United States, is twice as great as at the beginning of the present century.

If, then, there is no sign of decay in the popular attendance upon Christian worship, or in church membership, or in the number of churches and ministers of the Gospel, how about the propagating power of Christianity? Is there no evidence that the zeal of the church is less than at former periods, that the

so-called Power from on High has diminished? Are Christians less zealous in promoting their faith than once? Has the Holy Ghost forsaken the Christian church? It is during the past seventy-five years, within which Christianity is said by some to have been losing its power, that revivals of religion have become one of the marked features of the common experience of the church. It is no mark of decay that at least three-fourths of a million of people in our country meet upon week days for social prayer—a thing not heretofore known, to any such extent, in the Christian church, since the very early ages. Instead of dying out, our religion is partaking of its pristine vigor. And those who look most carefully over the field suppose that, in these very days, taking all the churches together, the revival spirit is far more abroad now than in the days of Wesley, Whitefield and Edwards, or Griffin, Nettleton and Lyman Beecher. The revivals of 1858 do not stand alone in our recent history. Almost every year brings its wonderful story. Our religious press teems with accounts of revivals. For example, taking up a single number of one of our religious papers at the time this article was preparing, we found a report of revivals in which there were numbered 1,333 conversions; and most of the converts had become connected with the churches. It was said that in one town, of six hundred inhabitants, there were seventy conversions, of whom thirty-four had at that date united with the Congregational church, which then numbered one-fourth of the entire population of the town. And it was also related that, upon an island on the coast of Maine, one young sailor suddenly left a profane and vicious course of life and became an earnest Christian, and, by his humble labors among his own townsmen, led about eighty of them to begin a new life. In another religious paper, taken up while this essay was preparing, there was a summary of seven hundred recent revivals, and 13,500 conversions, with 6,540 additions to the churches; besides those reckoned by our Methodist brethren, who reported 8,201 conversions in one week. Those familiar with our religious papers know that such accounts are not very uncommon. Some years witness



greater vigor than others; but year by year, multitudes, all through the New England hill-country, and among the hills and valleys of New York and Pennsylvania, and upon the prairies of the West, are led to Christ. And the great number so coming do not believe that Christianity is losing its power.

Nor can it be said that these powerful religious movements get no hold on thoughtful persons. Those who participate in these scenes are among the most sensible and stalwart people our communities afford. Moreover, these revivals are common in our colleges. In 1867, thirty-eight colleges, with 7,590 students, reported 788 conversions—more than ten per cent. of the whole number. In 1868, thirty colleges reported the conversion of more than thirteen per cent. of the students. Is it not certainly true that a great many of our most vigorous and studious men are turning heartily to the Christian faith?

The great congregations which gather from Sabbath to Sabbath indicate that Christianity is still alive, meeting the highest spiritual wants of men. The steady and rapid increase of the membership of Christian churches in proportion to the population, shows that revivals are common and to be relied upon from year to year; it shows that the church, as a whole, is in a wakeful state, and that it is not losing its propagating power. The steady increase of the number of churches, and the number of ministers, growing faster than the growth of the population, shows that, in respect to its interior life, Christianity is not losing its power. And is it not true that Christian zeal and the power of the Holy Ghost are operating with a force unknown to the world for many centuries? Those familiar with church history will recognize a new era in the life of the church, which is very far from indicating a decay of Christianity.

Is Christianity dying out? Certainly not, so far as concerns attendance upon Christian worship, the membership of churches, the number of churches, and the number of those who preach the Gospel as it is in Christ. Certainly not, so far as relates to the propagating power of our religion. We think, therefore, that when the revered sage of Concord speaks of the

"startling statistics," which indicate the decay of Christianity, he must be really startled, if he knows what are the true statistics.

Is Christianity dying out? Besides what we have said in this paper, there are other topics than those we have taken up which belong to the answer of this question. We have, therefore, reserved our most startling statistics for our next number.

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LINCOLN.

Blest is the man whose trust is founded deep  
Within the calmness of a righteous mind,  
Like the tossed ship, whose sunken anchors feel  
The living rock the dashing waves conceal,  
But with unyielding grasp the treasure bind,  
While fearful tempests o'er the ocean sweep!  
The outward eye may fill with sorrow's tears,  
The shaded brow some secret pain confess,  
And e'en the heart be tremulous with fears,  
Or pine beneath a sense of loneliness:  
Conspiring foes may struggle to oppress  
The persecuted spirit — but despair  
Shall never gain a habitation there!  
Oppression guards and fortifies her wrongs  
With iron manacles and clanking chains,  
The torturing screw and the tormenting tongs,  
And every dark invention that belongs  
To her infernal policy of pains.  
But warring with eternal hatred, Might,  
Though clad in triple armor, and obeyed  
By all the harnessed slaves his power hath made,  
Shall never sing a paen over Right,  
Till Impotence subdues the Infinite!  
And he who battles in a righteous cause,  
Though smitten early in the holy strife,  
Dies nobler than the Spartan for his laws,  
Or all the slain of Greek or Punic wars;  
For daring thus to lose, he findeth life.

BLACKBURN COLLEGE, *June, 1870.*

## THE BOOK TABLE.

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I.—PRIMITIVE MAN. By LOUIS FIGUIER. Revised Translation. Illustrated with 30 scenes of primitive life, and 233 figures of objects belonging to pre-historic ages. New York: D. Appleton & Co. Pp. 345. 8 vo.

Louis Figuier knows how to place scientific subjects within the grasp of non-scientific men. The diversity of his labors, indeed, prevents original investigation and exhaustive knowledge of his subjects, and leads him into some inaccuracies and unsupported generalizations; and his rapidity of preparation in the present instance interferes with a proper condensation and systematizing of his material, and even in some cases with his own consistency. And yet, after all such allowances, this new volume has very great excellencies. It gives a full and succinct history of modern investigations on this subject up to the present time, and by its numerous and admirable illustrations makes all the chief facts palpable to the eye. It also lays before the English reader a large amount of information hitherto found only in continental writers. The indications of pre-historic man are traced through the Drift Beds, Bone Caves and Shell Heaps, and thence through the so-called Stone, Bronze and Iron Ages. The subject is properly presented as a question to be settled on purely scientific evidence; although the author carefully announces in the outset the opinion, that the Book of Genesis does not furnish the data for ascertaining the time of man's origin. He assumes as a now conceded fact, that man was contemporaneous with the mammoth, cave-bear and hyena, and that he first saw the light on the great plateaux of Central Asia; and propounds his belief that the characteristics of the several races have been the gradual result of outer physical influences. The theory (or theories) that he was developed from some animal, he strongly repudiates; while somewhat inconsistently holding that in the early stages of his existence, "man could have been but little distinguished from the brute." The historic Introduction is followed by a full account of the flint-flakes, the caverns and their indications, the "kitchen middens," the lacustrine dwellings, and so on down to the historic era. All the facts and the traces of habits, arts, and, in the Stone age, of religious belief, are laid before us.

In treating of the Stone Age, the author concludes with the calculations of Morlot and Gilliéron as to its antiquity. The former calculating from the thickness of certain alluvial deposits that cover certain stone and bronze implements at Villeneuve, as compared with the stratum over

certain Roman relics in the same place of which the age is proximately known, reckons the Bronze epoch from 2,900 to 4,200 years old, and the Stone age "from 4,700 to 10,000." Gilliéron took for his basis the slow receding of lake Bienne from a certain pile-work of the Stone age, near the bridge of Thièle, and, having a fixed rate of recession ascertained (or supposed to be ascertained) for the last 750 years, dates the settlement of Thièle as at least 6,750 years old. The loose way in which these calculations and reasonings are conducted is shown alike by the huge margin of Morlot's reckoning "from 4,700 to 10,000 years," and by Figuier's comment, page 293: "The preceding calculations [of Morlot and Gilliéron] assign to the Stone age in Switzerland an antiquity of 6,000 or 7,000 years *before the Christian era*; and to the Bronze epoch of 4,000 years before the same era. There is still much uncertainty in the figures thus given to satisfy the public curiosity; but there is at least one fact which is altogether unquestionable—that *these calculations* have dealt a fatal blow to the recognized chronology." If this be so, let it be so. When it is proved to be so, we will accept it. But Figuier talks at random concerning his own authorities. He admits their "uncertainty," and then he misstates them. Neither of them carries us confidently even 6,000 years *before the Christian era*. Both reckon back *from the present time*; Gilliéron less than 5,000 years before the Christian era, and Morlot, in his lowest guess, less than 3,000. But think of calling that a "calculation" which allows a margin of 5,300 years in 10,000—a period more than twice the whole range of authentic secular history. Surely it is easy to handle years by the thousand—and "make nothing of it." But give us *the facts*; they are what we want. And we know of no volume which gives them on the whole so completely and so clearly as this of Figuier. As to the chronological results which may finally come from these investigations, if any, we are prepared both to accept them, and *to wait for them*. If the human race has lived ten thousand years already, there is no occasion for being in a hurry about it just now.

II.—THE PENTATEUCH AND ITS ANATOMISTS. By the REV. R. T. BIRKS, Vicar of Holy Trinity, Cambridge. London: Hatchards, 1869. Pp. 320. 12mo.

Mr. Birks has previously written a valuable treatise on the Exodus of Israel, in reply to modern objectors. In the present volume he deals with the attempt to disintegrate the Pentateuch, especially as retailed by Colenso, and by Davidson in his Introduction. He goes over the ground with vast labor of comparison, and strikingly shows the incongruities, mutual contradictions and wretched shifts to which such writers are reduced by their theories. On the other side, he presents positively the indissoluble connections of the narrative. He accounts, perhaps too minutely, for the use of the diverse names of God, which formed the starting point of the Jehovistic and Elohist discussions. In the work

of refutation, the author is especially successful. He solves, in the main, with much acuteness and ability, the alleged anachronisms and historic and geographical inconsistencies, together with the modifications of the legislation. The author makes large use of Hengstenberg, Haevernick, Keil, Kurtz and others, but with entire independence and freshness. Thus he adds another to the proposed solutions of the "Dan" problem in Genesis xiv, viz.: the supposition that Abraham himself gave the name Dan—"judgment"—to the place of his great victory, and that thus it is of the same early date with its proverbially allied name Beer-sheba. The view is ingeniously argued, although we prefer a different one.

On the whole we do not know any treatise which refutes so fully and specifically, and at the same time so tersely and clearly, the now widespread, but mostly weak objections to the Pentateuch. While chiefly answering English objectors, it actually meets the German ones, inasmuch as Dr. Davidson (as usual) has drawn as largely as possible on the German supply.

III.—GEOLOGY AND REVELATION; or, The Ancient History of the Earth considered in the light of Geological Facts and Revealed Religion. With Illustrations. By the REV. GIRARD MOLLAY, D.D., Professor of Theology in the Royal College of St. Patrick, Maynooth. London: Longman, Green, Reader & Dyer. 1870. Pp. 418. 12mo.

Here we have an enlightened discussion from a Roman Catholic source. The stage of progress of its expected readers is shown by the fact that three-fourths of the volume are devoted to a résumé of the scientific proofs of the antiquity of the earth. This part of the work seems to us well done, and the outline an excellent sketch of the facts in the case. In Part Second, the author propounds and discusses, without deciding between them, two hypotheses: first, that of an indefinite duration between the creation of the world and the first Mosaic "day," the days being then ordinary days; and, second, the hypothesis that the days of creation were long periods of time. He holds, contrary to Miller and others, that either hypothesis is admissible and adequate. We judge that he adopts the latter, which he ably sets forth. The most noteworthy point of his discussion is his appeal to the Christian fathers and Church authorities. He cites Augustine, Origen, Clement of Alexandria, and Athanasius, against the opinion that the days of creation were days in the ordinary sense of the word; Basil, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Bede, and Peter Lombard, for the existence of created matter prior to the work of the six days; Petavius, Perrerus, and Hugh St. Victor, that this interval is undefined in Scripture; St. Augustine and St. Thomas for the admissibility of diverse interpretations; and Cardinal Wiseman in support of his own views.

- IV.—FIVE YEARS IN DAMASCUS, with travels and researches in Palmyra, Lebanon, the giant cities of Bashan, and the Hauran. By J. L. PORTER, D.D., LL.D., Professor of Biblical Criticism, Assembly's College, Belfast. Second Edition. With Maps and Illustrations. London: John Murray. 1870. Pp. 338. 12mo.

A new edition of a very interesting book of adventures and observations in an interesting country, by an accomplished oriental scholar. It is to be reckoned among the more valuable, though not scientific, books of eastern travel. It fills a gap in the range of eastern explorations, and is full of adventure. The author replies, and we judge successfully, to Mr. Freshfield's strictures on his first edition.

- V.—TEXTS FROM THE HOLY BIBLE explained by the help of the Ancient Monuments. By SAMUEL SHARPE, author of the "History of Egypt." Containing 166 Drawings on Wood. Second Edition. London: John Russell Smith. 1869. Pp. 210. 12mo.

This noted archæologist has here collected nearly 200 illustrations from ancient monuments, and placed them in connection with as many Scripture texts, from Genesis to Revelation. Many of them are striking and valuable, a source of real light. Some are of doubtful relationship; and some are clearly wide of the mark. The wise student will derive many instructive hints and explanations from them. Still, the first thing on which we open is the theory which makes the rivers of Eden include the Nile and Ganges, and Cush to be Ethiopia—absurdly connecting Homer's river Oceanus with the water around the "circle" of the earth, "in the middle of which" "Jerusalem stands." Let us understand whether we will consider Genesis a history or a myth.

- VI.—THE LIVING QUESTIONS OF THE AGE. By an American Citizen. Chicago: H. A. Sumner. Philadelphia: Smith, English & Co. 1870. Pp. 297. 8vo.

The American citizen, Dr. J. B. Walker, in these pages, "has endeavored to meet, in a popular form, some of the prevailing moral fallacies of the age." He opens with certain phases of Liberal Christianity, as exhibited by two of its extreme representatives, Theodore Parker and James Freeman Clarke; proceeds to exhibit the Development of Divine Revelation in the three dispensations of power, law, love; then discusses in succession the Personality of God, the Tri-unity of the Divine Mind, Human Depravity, Reconciliation with God, Future Retribution, Written Revelation a necessity and a motive power, Reformers, Women's Rights and Suffrage, and Capital Punishment.

The discussion is professedly popular, and designedly deals only with certain marked aspects of these topics. Many of the points are very effectively put. One of the most telling chapters is that wherein the author exposes the folly and impracticability of the "Woman Suffrage" movement. Dr. Walker has a clearness and sharpness in his mode of putting such things equally difficult to be misunderstood or refuted.

VII.—THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT; or, Philosophy of the Divine Operation in the Redemption of Man. Being Volume Second of "The Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation." By JAMES B. WALKER. 1870. Chicago: Henry A. Sumner. Philadelphia: Smith, English & Co. Pp. 241. 8vo.

Dr. Walker writes in a very direct and lucid style, with steady progressiveness of method, and with a devout and reverential spirit. To many it will be a recommendation, and to many it will not, that he endeavors to ingraft the Scripture teachings concerning the Holy Spirit upon the analogy of the human soul, and throughout to conceive and treat the subject as a "philosophy." But this is part of his programme. The volume bears the marks of long thinking, and is the fruit of a mind that evidently has somewhat thoroughly elaborated its own system. The careful reader will find much material for thought, and many practical suggestions that are eminently wise and useful. Mingled with much free speculation is a good deal of cautious reserve, and even occasional dimness of exhibition. Thus we are not quite sure that we apprehend the author's exact view concerning the relation of the Spirit and the Word, his precise notion concerning miracles and prayer. It may be our fault, however. It is, perhaps, natural for one who has thought out his own system so fully, to carry a tone of entire satisfaction with his own results, and of slight superciliousness towards those who differ from him, whether in speculation or interpretation. Thus, the author declares rather sweepingly (p. 150), that the "Commentators have blundered even more in regard to this passage [John xvi: 2] than *they usually do* in regard to the spiritual import of John's gospel," and speaks of their "*generally* confusing the sense" of Christ's teachings in Matthew xxiv.

A thinker so decided will cheerfully allow us the privilege of questioning some of his interpretations and some of his positions. We hesitate, *e. g.*, to accept his use of Rom. i: 4, or his exposition of Matt. xxiv, "clear" as the latter seems to him. And we question the statement (p. 70) that "how the effects [miracles] were produced, whether *subjectively* in the minds of the witnesses, is not important;" and the unqualified allegation (p. 56) that the election of Matthias was "a precipitancy and an error." This last statement has been often made, but the narrative certainly does not indicate it, but the contrary—"and he was numbered with the eleven apostles." By a singular oversight or misprint, the plural *formulae* is four times used for the singular *formula*.

Dr. Walker's treatise will repay a careful perusal.

VIII.—LIFTING THE VEIL. New York: Charles Scribner & Co. Chicago: W. B. Kean & Cooke. 1870. Pp. 200. 12mo.

The motto of this anonymous work, dedicated "To my friends," is "Which veil is done away in Christ." This is its spirit. It seems as though written from deep and sad experience, and shows the progress of



a smitten soul finding its way from the conception of a heaven of which a departed lover or husband is the chief attraction, unto that in which "the Lamb is the light in the midst thereof." In the course of the narrative and discussion, it places the question of communion with departed spirits where the Bible leaves it, corrects many false notions, and brings out in strong relief the true consolation, and the scriptural heaven. It is incidental to such a treatment that it cannot be made half so melo-dramatic, or romantic, or so attractive to an unrenewed heart as the view which changes heaven into the Elysian fields. But few who take up this volume will lay it down without finishing.

We might offer some criticisms. But we will mention only one minor drawback—to us a great annoyance—the continual Scotch-Irish-Southern substitution of "will" and "would" for "shall" and "should" with the first person, in cases of simple futurity. It occurs dozens of times, four times even on a single page. "You do not think, then, that we *will* know all in a moment, when we get there." "Here I *will* be able to feel the change more," etc., *ad vexationem*. We hope that our young writers—and preachers, too,—will spare to us this good old English distinction. We sometimes doubt.

IX.—THE IOWA BAND. Boston: Cong. Pub. Soc. 1870. Pp. 184.

A labor of love; and performed with excellent tact, modesty, and judgment. Knowing nearly all the facts and characters by personal knowledge, almost from the beginning of the story, and some of them from an earlier date, and having always regarded the "Iowa Band" movement of 1843 as one of the noblest and most charming American examples of simple, manly missionary devotion, we were prepared to go over this timely and apt record in a spirit of criticism both gentle and sharp. We do not detect any one-sidedness or overdoing; neither prejudice or exaggeration or lack of appreciation mars the writer's work. He had a delicate task, for most of the actors in this romantic Christian story yet live. The writing is done in a conscientious and quiet way, as far removed from what is deemed "Western" excess of tone or statement as can well be. The Christian sympathy and evangelical earnestness every where perceptible are admirable. The precious aroma of Home Missions, in one of its purest and richest examples, breathes through the whole. Dr. Barrows' Introduction is most fitting. The illustrations—"Father Turner," the Ordination Church and Academy, Iowa College, Denmark Academy—are *ad rem*. The variety of the chapters, and purity and neatness of the style, keep one's interest fresh throughout. And he can not but wish, in closing, that other such "bands" may issue from Andover, and Chicago Seminaries, to take possession of other new territories for Christ, and have their story as faithfully and becomingly written.

There is an inadvertent omission on page 111, among the names of benefactors of Iowa College, of that of Dea. AARON BENEDICT of Waterbury,

Conn., who has added \$10,000 to his previous handsome gifts since this volume was published, and is, thus far, the largest actual contributor to its funds.

X. — VITAL PHILOSOPHY; a Survey of Substance, and an Exposition of Natural Religion. By J. S. McDONALD. Philadelphia: Lippincott. Chicago: S. C. Griggs & Co. Pp. 384.

It is a pity to put tinted paper, clear type, and good binding to such a use as the publishing of this farrago of nonsense. One need not read it through — will any sane and sensible person attempt it? — in order to perceive its utter and extreme foolishness, any more than he need eat a barrel of flour to know that it is sour. The stuff that is here presented as thought is simply remediless nonsense. Very likely some tolerably intelligible sentences may be found, and the writer may have borrowed *some* ideas more sensible than his own. But he seems to have gulped down the crudest notions of progressive thinkers, and supposed that the reproduction of them, jumbled and mangled, would instruct and edify the world. What shall be said of a man who expresses the hold of error on men's minds by such language as its "prevailing lodgment in sentient structures?" or who gives such definitions as these? — "Philosophy is a term applied to a general embodiment (!) of thoughts and ideas, emanating from the highest ranges of mental attributes governing the conditions of voluntary or sentient life." "By consciousness we mean the interior substance or governing property of spirit which, when crystallized, (!) or concentrated into forms constitutes the integuments of thoughts, ideas and motor powers of activity." "Attraction seems to have been the first force thrown out from the elemental domain of consciousness (!) upon the primitive or original conditions of matter, resulting in its condensation." "By cellular life is meant a base of matter, of atomic indivisibility, comprising within its being epitomes of higher elements — such as electricity, spirit, and consciousness; the most interior property being a part of deific mind, and representing, in infinitesimal proportions, His organic life and will, power," etc. *Quant. suff.* We have quoted *ad aperturas*.

XI. — CHARLES DICKENS; a Sketch of his Life and Works. By F. B. PERKINS. New York: Putnam. Chicago: S. C. Griggs & Co. Pp. 264.

An unusually well-wrought book of a very unsatisfactory kind. The ample obituary notices of eminent men awaiting their decease in the pigeon-holes of the great foreign journals seem to have developed or expanded into this new species of books, gossipy, descriptive, and semi-critical. They stay the stomach of the mercurial public while more substantial things are preparing, perhaps spoil the appetite for them. Mr. Perkins has used the scissors largely and unusually well, and the connections from his own pen are skillful. We imagine the writer and printer must have proceeded *pari passu*; perhaps the last fifty pages were put

in type first. They contain M. Henri Taine's estimate of the great novelist, and are much the best part of the book. If they induce the light reading people to relish such a writer as Taine, they will do better service than all the rest.

**XII.—PROVERBS, ECCLESIASTES, AND THE SONG OF SOLOMON;** with Notes, Critical, Explanatory and Practical. By Rev HENRY COWLES, D.D. New York: D. Appleton & Co. Chicago: S. C. Griggs & Co. Pp. 363. 12mo.

Prof. Cowles has selected for his series of practical commentaries, parts of the Old Testament marked by some peculiar difficulties and obscurities. He has thus rendered good service to the Christian public, by giving meaning and interest to valuable portions of God's word not familiar to most readers of the Bible. In the volume before us, the divinely inspired wisdom of Solomon is brought within the comprehension of common minds. The annotations are simple, brief and lucid. The views of others are also concisely stated, where there is any important difference.

The introductions to Ecclesiastes and Solomon's Song are quite full. In the first, these six points are distinctly treated: I. The author. II. The theme and special aim of the book. III. The style or dialect. IV. The author's alleged skepticism. V. His alleged epicureanism. VI. The practical value of the book for the age when it was written and for all ages. The clue to the author's interpretation is given under the second head, where the theme of the book is stated to be, "The utter vanity of all earthly things when sought as the chief good of man;" and its aim is set forth in the following hypothesis: "Given the wise but sensual and sinning Solomon, now impressed with a sense of his sin and folly and of his consequent duty to obviate the mischiefs thereof, and we have, as a result, this book written for those who had most emulated his example."

Against his previous leaning, Dr Cowles regards the Song of Solomon as "an allegory designed to represent the love of God to his covenanted people." The text is given in a new translation, and with the supposed parts of the dialogue distinctly marked. The notes are well adapted to raise the mind of the reader from the sensuous imagery to the spiritual significance of this Song of Songs.

**XIII.—THE ROB ROY ON THE JORDAN, NILE, RED SEA AND GENNESARETH, ETC. ; a Canoe Cruise in Palestine and Egypt. and the Waters of Damascus.** By J. MACGREGOR, M. A. New York: Harper & Brothers. Chicago: S. C. Griggs & Co. Pp. 464. 12mo.

A charming book for summer vacation reading, written in an easy, graceful style, spiced with novel adventures on old familiar ground always full of interest, and embodying much new and valuable information to be jotted in the common-place book for future reference. The author is a Scotchman, an enthusiastic member of "the Canoe Club," and none the less for that, a warm-hearted Christian. His canoe, the Rob Roy, is per-

sonified, almost worshipped, and the reader's interest is identified with her as the heroine of the volume. But all this is subordinated to a higher devotion for the hero of the world's redemption, who was baptized in Jordan, and who chose the Sea of Galilee and its shores as the scene of many of his mighty works. The author's graphic sketches of his own observations on that sea, give reality to the recorded incidents of Jesus' life, and new beauty and force to the words he spoke, "as he sat beside the sea."

XIV.—*WOMAN'S FRIENDSHIP; a Story of Domestic Life.* By GRACE AGUILAR, author of "Home Influence." New York: D. Appleton & Co. Chicago: S. C. Griggs & Co. Pp. 357. 12mo.

This is a novel with a moral. Its object, as stated in the midst of the story, is, "to prove the good that may be accomplished by woman upon woman—how consoling and how beautiful may be woman's mission even unto woman." The incidents of a friendship between a lady of noble birth and one of England's middle class, are sketched in pleasing style, and with some dramatic effect. As a story, the book will not command a very high estimation among the thousands of like productions which the press is sending off. Its general tone is healthful, and it is seasoned with a modicum of Christian sentiment, yet we apprehend that its moral influence will be neither positive nor strong. It is a safer book than many of its class to have a place in our Christian families. For the habitual novel-reader it will prove too tame, notwithstanding the endeavor to make it suit the perverted taste of the age, by gathering the chief interest of the tale around the clearing up of a doubt respecting the legitimacy of the heroine's birth.

XV.—*IN SPAIN, AND A VISIT TO PORTUGAL.* By HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN. Author's Edition. New York: Hurd & Houghton. Chicago: S. C. Griggs & Co. Pp. 289. 12mo.

We apprehend that many will be disappointed in this book, as we have been, the name and fame of the author raising expectations which are not realized. It is a very common-place account of the author's journey to the principal cities of the peninsula, quite lacking in the charms of incident and style which characterize other productions of his pen. Some valuable information is given, but little more than a good guide-book would furnish. Its descriptions no doubt are accurate, and to such as enjoy the small gossip about the company in a diligence and petty annoyances at hotels, it will afford some entertainment.

XVI.—*How CROPS GROW; a Treatise on the Chemical Composition, Structure, and Life of the Plant, for all Students of Agriculture.* By SAMUEL W. JOHNSON, M. A., Professor in the Sheffield Scientific School of Yale College. New York: Orange Judd & Co. Pp. 394.

The liberally-educated man is a student of everything, and the speaker or writer finds that nothing comes amiss in the way of mental equipment.

Therefore, the special student of Adam's profession should not be left to monopolize such a book as this, which is the latest and best compendium on its subject, and has met with high and unqualified approbation on both sides of the Atlantic. Culture should include agriculture.

The contents of the volume are explained in the title. It is a very compact, systematic little work, with novel wood-cuts, and appended tables of chemical analysis that seem to embrace all the common fruits, vegetables and grains, and every portion of the same. The companion volume, by the same able author, "How Crops Feed," amplifies one short section in this manual.

**XVII.—PRACTICAL FLORICULTURE, for the Amateur and Professional Florist.** By PETER HENDERSON, author of "Gardening for Profit." Illustrated. New York: Orange Judd & Co. Pp. 249.

Flora, in a voice audible to us, has often complained that books on floriculture, with a promise of "full directions," tell everything but just that which the inexperienced most need to know. This volume, however, she commends as really practical and useful to the beginner, though dealing more or less with conservatories and professional matters. It is a new and handy book, by a master of the art, and excellently illustrated, with chapters on the laying out of flower garden and lawn, planting, potting, temperature and moisture, cold-frames, hot-beds, seeds, cuttings, culture of winter flowers, bouquets, hanging baskets, window gardens, rock-work, insects, nature's law of colors, lists of plants, diary of operations for each day of the year, besides separate chapters devoted to lilies, roses, verbenas, bulbs, etc.

**XVIII.—THE MARTYR CHURCH; A Narrative of the Introduction, Progress, and Triumph of Christianity in Madagascar.** By Rev. WILLIAM ELLIS. Congregational Publishing Society. Pp. 404.

It is impossible for the Christian to read this book, without a new sense of the presence of God in the world of to-day, as he was present to the Jewish world, long ago. There is something awful in contemplating the Almighty power over a people chosen, as the Malagasy people have been chosen, to pass through the furnace and come forth purified in the image of Christ. There is not the slowness of the ancient story; the degradation, pain and triumph are crowded into fifty years. Perhaps the most impressive point in the narrative is where the Satanic queen and her nobles are restrained from violence till the completion and distribution of the Bible in the native language; for, when this work was ended, the missionaries were expelled, and, during twenty-five years of horrible persecution, this ignorant people had no guide or teacher but the Holy Spirit and the Gospel. Yet, nowhere can be found more noble development of Christian character than is contained in the records of these martyrs. May not this remind the church of a significant truth?

The midnight meetings in the mountains, the Bibles buried for safety, the worn leaves of the Testament passed in secret from one to another, and the teaching of passages to such as had no printed portion, are all touching evidences of the earnestness of these hunted souls. The glorious fruition of suffering for Christ's sake, shines out of the dark story, and promises the conversion of the whole of Madagascar to Christianity.

Every Sabbath School library ought to possess this valuable history of the civilization, suffering, and conversion of a heathen nation in our own day.

**XIX.—THE JUNO STORIES.** By JACOB ABBOTT. Vol. I. Juno and Georgie. Vol. II. May Osborne. New York: Dodd & Mead. Chicago: W. G. Holmes, 148 Lake st. Pp. 312, 301. 16mo. Price, \$1.25.

These volumes are from the new firm of Dodd & Mead, the successors of M. W. Dodd, well known as the publisher of many valuable religious books, and are a good beginning of their work.

Mr. Jacob Abbott's books for juvenile readers, are always welcome. He has a peculiar tact in adapting religious and moral truths to the comprehension of youthful minds. He knows how to be simple and entertaining, yet not childish. These books can be safely introduced into the family and the Sunday School library, and we sincerely hope that the series will embrace several additional volumes.

**XX.—TEMPERANCE ANECDOTES.** Original and Selected. By GEORGE W. BUNGAY. New York: National Temperance Society. 1870. Pp. 284. 16mo.

**THE DRINKING FOUNTAIN STORIES.** New York: N. T. Society. 1870. Pp. 192. 16mo.

**JUG-OR-NOT.** By Mrs. J. McNAIR WRIGHT. New York: N. T. Society. 1870. Pp. 350. 16mo.

**JOB TUFTON'S REST.** By CLARA L. BALFOUR. New York: N. T. Society. 1870. Pp. 332. 16mo.

**THE HARKER FAMILY.** By EMILY THOMPSON. New York: N. T. Society. 1870. Pp. 336. 16mo.

**COME HOME MOTHER.** By NELSIE BROOK. New York: N. T. Society. 1870. Pp. 143. Small 12mo.

The National Temperance Society, as the above list of recent publications shows, is actively engaged in supplying reading for the family and Sabbath Schools. These volumes are all well written, and of admirable moral tone; the larger stories are somewhat sensational, but fitted to impress forcibly the varied evils of intemperance—Mrs. Wright showing especially how whole families, and successive generations are involved in the suffering it brings.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

## LONGEVITY WITH A COLOR TO IT.

A HOUSE well painted lasts long. Perhaps the same rule holds in respect to men. Those of stronger color than our own yield notable examples of longevity, *e. g.*, the Red men. In these languid and stifled days, when the pen is not up to themes of more moment and rhetoric is "a burden," we draw out of a certain pigeon-hole the items and newspaper cuttings that have been dropped into it in the course of several years, and discourse a little upon colored longevity. The theme is cognate to the weather, since the dark-skinned long-livers are native to a temperature even hotter than this we write in.

There went the rounds a while since an account of the very "last" surviving soldier of the Revolution. Till the next "last" survivor is heard from we take Daniel Frederic Beakman, who departed this life at Freedom (appropriate name), Cataaugus Co., N. Y., as the extremest example of white longevity we shall be likely to have. Born in New Jersey, 1760, a resident of the Mohawk valley during the Revolution, enrolled as a soldier in 1778, voting at every Presidential election from Washington's to Grant's, looking upon the fifth generation during his life-time, living with one wife eighty-five years, and burying her six years ago at the good old age of one hundred and five, he died himself at last one hundred and nine years and six months old. We do not remember any of our Revolutionary patriarchs who have lived so long; and now that the "last" is gone — if he be the last — we shall not be likely to see other examples of such longevity in the white race very soon. We say, "if he be the last," and we might add, "if he was a Revolutionary soldier." A few years since the Congressional Committee on Revolutionary Pensions reported twelve survivors, and Beakman's name is not among them. They were of very respectable longevity, ranging from Alexander Maroney, Lake George, N. Y., 94 years old, to Amaziah Goodwin, Somersworth, N. H., 105. Five of them had passed their 100th year — among them Rev. Daniel Waldo, Windham, Conn., now deceased.

Our collection of facts have not been sought, they have come incidentally to hand. They have been made irrespective, or rather comprehensive of races — black, white and red — and certainly without *prejudice* of race: and while a purposed, methodical, and exhaustive gathering of instances might show a different result, our own shows that white longevity falls behind longevity with a color to it. Not always within particular limits. One



year twenty-four persons died in the United States at or over 100 years of age. Of these, seven were "of African descent," one Indian, the other thirteen white, of whom, by the way, twelve were females. The highest age claimed was for the Indian, 120 years.\* There was an Indian woman living at Chillicothe, Ohio, a few years since, named Anna Reed, a native of N. Carolina, 103 years old — whose husband — an Indian also, we take it — died at the age of 113.

But very respectable examples of old age — *real* old age — are furnished by the whites. We begin with a woman of Irish birth in Hartford, Conn., living some years since at the ripe age of 102. She had at that time forty grandchildren. Then we have a German, in Burlington Co., N. Jersey, about the same time, who arrived at Philadelphia about a dozen years before the Revolution, and was thirty years a cooper in the employ of Stephen Girard, who had completed his 105th year (Rider). The census now taking discloses a veteran of 106 years, in Lake Co., Ill. § In 1867, Mrs. Joel Eastman died in Salisbury, N. H., at the age of 105, able to remember facts that took place a hundred years before. The oldest man in Pennsylvania in 1866, was reported to be in Halfmoon township, Center Co., and then in his 112th year. In 1863, an Indiana journal claimed "the oldest man in the world" for Tippecanoe Co., in that State, 113 years old. He was born in Virginia in 1750. But the year before (1862), the death of a lady at Baltimore is reported, who was born in 1744, and lived to see her fifth generation, dying at 118. And the year before that, they claimed at Oswego, N. Y., the possession of the veritable "oldest inhabitant" in one of the other sex, born in Brooklyn, in 1743, then living and healthy, at a trifle over 118. Among the memorabilia of this gentleman are the facts that he was last a father at the mature age of 76, and that he had been a smoker during his last hundred years, consuming in his lifetime more than a thousand pounds of tobacco — a fact or feat, one would think, which should have finished him long before!

So much for the whites and the red men. *Enter* the negroes! The census returns show that the average age of the colored population of Boston is about four years and six months longer than that of the white population. This in a northern climate, on the coast, subject to the harsh, and, to many constitutions, unendurable, north-east winds from the sea. In Rhode Island, the average age of negroes at death is much greater than that of whites. In the annual registration report of South Carolina for 1859, there are twenty-two deaths reported at the age of 100 or over; and of these, eighteen were deaths of slaves. In that State, of three hundred and fourteen whose deaths were attributed to old age, only forty-nine were white persons. The two oldest decedents that year were colored; and the same was true in the State of Maine.

In 1863, there died in Florida a slave who remembered Washington well,

\* Twenty-two men and twenty-two women died in the U. S., in 1856, who had passed 100 years.

§ When the census is published, we may attempt a second paper.

and went through the streets of Savannah with him (and, strange to say, was *not* one of his "body servants"), and was more than a hundred years old. The oldest person in Lincoln Co., Ky., a few years since, was a negro of the same age. Iowa has, at present, a negro living at Clarinda who has passed his hundredth year. There were recently two survivors of the small slave population of Massachusetts (made free under the Constitution of 1784), one of whom, a member of Rev. Dr. S. G. Lothrop's church, was over 92, and the other supposed to be 105. General Saxton had his letters taught at Port Royal to a freedman of the same age, who was first the slave of a Governor of South Carolina, and presented by him to General Nath. Greene, of revolutionary memory. In 1866, there was a colored woman at Milesburg, in Center Co., Ky., whose age was 106. During the Rebellion, another died at Nashville, Tenn., who had reached 107 years. When General Burnside took Newbern, his master turned over to the government a slave who was at St. Domingo in the insurrection under L'Ouverture, and had lived through seven wars, who was affirmed to be of the same age. He had lived 70 years at Newbern. A woman servant from generation to generation in one family at Nashville, nursing four or five generations, died at the age of 109. The last survivor of Braddock's defeat, a negro 109 or 110 years old, died at Williamstown, Mass., Jan. 27, 1855. An old colored citizen of Toronto, Canada, died in that city, August, 1863, aged 110. In April, 1864, a woman of the same age, who was a slave in New York till it became free, died at Lansingburg, in that State. Another, just as old, died this present year, at Nashville, Tenn., who was freed by Mr. Lincoln's proclamation. On Barnwell Island, during the Rebellion, was a man who had lived as long, who saw Washington on his master's plantation before the battle of Camden, and labored till his ninetieth year, and was never sick in his life. At Des Moines, in Iowa, lived last year a negro woman of 112—a slave in Virginia till she was 75. In Logan Co., Ohio, died not long since the only one of our colored more-than-centenarians, who claimed to belong to Washington on the strength of his written certificate, who was 114 years and six months, and more. We have some distance further up the scale of longevity yet to go. We have record of a colored woman dying in Baltimore at 116; a colored man in Michigan (April, 1864) at 117; another living at Rocky Hill, Conn., ditto (March 16, 1863); a negro preacher (Baptist) buried at Pensacola, Florida, judged to be little less than 120; a colored woman dying in Chicago, March 18, 1869, of the same longevity (who "had never been the nurse of Washington!"); another, ditto, on both points, living at Newport, Ky., in 1866; and census returns of one dying in Louisiana in 1856, who had also reached 120 years, another at 124, and a third, in Virginia, at 127. Also, a man living in Vernon Co., Virginia, till recently, who had passed 122, and never was Washington's body servant! The town clerk of Woodstock, Vt., in the year 1855, testified to the advanced age of a colored man then living there, a native of Martinique, of 126 years, claimed to be "the oldest man in America." But here, as in cases of lighter color, the temerity of the claim

is probably shown by the statement of a St. Louis journal a year or two later, that a slave woman died near that city, "the oldest person heard of or read of in modern times"—declared to be aged 130 years.

We shall not open any scientific or philosophical discussion upon these facts. Comparative longevity is not yet recognized in science; nor are the materials of knowledge, even, very abundant. The books upon races of men, from Pritchard down to Brace, are silent upon the subject. The facts themselves may be questioned. The late Sir George Cornewall Lewis once declared that no one ever lived to the age of a hundred, or, rather, that legal proof of it could not be had. There is a "dead weight of scientific skepticism against the evidence," says an essayist in the *Saturday Review*. "No one can say that the probabilities are not enormously great against Old Parr having lived to 152, or Jenkins to 169. There is some limit of belief at which our minds, however elastic, cease to yield to almost any evidence. \* \* \* There is no fixed limit to human life; but human life is not, therefore, of an arbitrary length. A man eight feet high is a rarity, and a giant; a man eighty feet high is a fiction. No one can mention the exact distance beyond which no rifle can throw a ball, but we may be pretty certain no rifle ever yet threw a ball ten miles." The essayist suggests that most cases of alleged longevity are found in the early records of civilization, occurred in remote and little-known places, and lack definite testimony in their behalf. "We are told of some laborious German who collected considerably more than a thousand cases of persons living to upwards of a hundred. Of these, fifteen had died between the ages of 130 and 140, six between 140 and 160, and one (our old friend Jenkins, we presume) at 169. It is remarkable that people who live to this incredible extent generally do it in out-of-the-way country parishes." Yet the essayist admits that, "putting aside the extreme cases, it seems more probable that people have sometimes overleapt the bound of the century by three or four years. Cases have been produced in which the evidence for an age of 103 or 104 seems tolerably conclusive. Indeed, one venerable old lady seems to have convinced Sir George Cornewall Lewis that she had succeeded, not only in living to 103, but in cracking nuts with her teeth afterwards. Her birth was recorded in the register of a neighboring parish, and there seems to have been no reasonable ground for doubting her identity." We are quoting from the *Saturday Review* of January 14, 1865. Now more than a year before, its neighbor, the London journal *All the Year Round*, published a circumstantial account of one Robert Bowman, of Irthington, England, who died June 18, 1823,—“a hundred and seventeen years and eight months after his baptism (which was some years after his birth, and which he recollected), and was, therefore, most probably, at least in his one hundred and twentieth year.” The details given of this case would occupy several of these pages. “He never took tea or coffee, or snuff, or smoked tobacco. He was a ‘top-worker’ in the peat-bogs, had no steady hours, often slept out-doors all night, in his cart, at the age of eighty; was married at the age of fifty, and had six sons,—his wife dying

when he had reached 102, and she 81,—never wore glasses to aid his sight, and at the age of 114, could hear the ticking of a watch in the window several yards off. The perfect state of his senses and faculties kept him from finding fault with the habits, or manners, or changes of the successive generations he saw around him. In his 108th year he did all sorts of farm work, hedging, reaping, hay-making, etc. In his 109th year he walked sixteen miles with his staff under his arm." We have no more reason to doubt these circumstantial and unchallenged statements, taken from a more widely circulating journal than the *Saturday Review*, than we have to question the advanced age and vigor to the last of Father Sewall and Father Sawyer of Maine, Dr. Nott of Schenectady and Dr. Nott of Franklin, Conn., or Father Waldo of revolutionary memory. These were clergymen, universally respected, living and dying within our own times and knowledge.

But the negroes! There are dark suspicions afloat that the data about them are vague and untrustworthy. They never had much credit or justice on any point; why should they in respect to their alleged superior longevity? The *Saturday Review* says: "As the domain of the unknown recedes, the centenarians become suspiciously scarce. They vanish like the phoenix, the snapping-turtle, or the sea-serpent, before the approach of civilization. In modern years we remark that a considerable proportion of the cases of extreme age, as of apparitions of the sea-serpent, are recorded by American witnesses. It may be used in argument as to the condition of negro slaves, that they are frequently quoted as living for superhuman periods. We read of slaves who have been 120 years in one family; they have generally belonged to General Washington, whose venerable nurse was one of Barnum's most brilliant triumphs. Either slaves find their mode of life singularly healthy, or, as the skeptical may allege, their intellects are not clear enough to preserve very accurate records of time." But many of our cases were not slaves, did not belong to Washington, and, of those found at the South it may be said, that they appeared, instead of vanishing, with the approach of civilization—and the Union armies, and many instances have the authority of the census. The majority, it is true, were slaves living at the South, but enough of them lived at the North—as far North, too, as Vermont and Canada—to show a race-characteristic, probably independent of climate and condition. The wish has been expressed that some one of a good constitution, under favorable circumstances, should try the experiment how long he could manage to live. We suspect that "our fellow-citizens of African descent," under most unfavorable circumstances, have tried it without intending to do so! or at least have shown that longevity with a color to it is longer than the white variety.

The thermometer ranges too high for moralizing upon the theme. Whether the plantation lords, in the old lawless, vicious, and wretched days of slavery, lengthened the lives of their natural children, at least, by mixture of bloods, or whether longevity was diminished on the other side of "visible admixture," we leave for the physicists. Whether the new conditions of the dark race are raising our American rate of longevity at

large we leave for the statisticians. Mortality has always been less among our free black population than among the slaves; births and ages greater. Whether emancipation perceptibly lengthens human life the world over, as it occurs, the philosophers will soon make clear. Some future Cochin will give us the figures, and historians and critics will be busy with the deductions. What effects the longer-lived race will bring into American civilization and society, now they are so wondrously elevated, through this peculiarity, we cannot say. Mrs. Stowe did not touch that topic in the conclusion of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. The able Secretary of the American Missionary Association, Rev. M. E. Strieby, is wont to discuss, in a strong sermon, the contributions our freed millions will make to American religion; but we do not remember that he suggests anything about the old age of African piety. It is to be hoped that many specimens of it—more tenacious of vitality than even the longest livers we have instanced—will last over far into the twentieth century of our Lord to recount to generations of shorter span—white generations especially—the marvellous scenes and transactions of the eventful and immortal years that made them free.

**REVISION OF THE AUTHORIZED VERSION.**—One of the noteworthy enterprises of the times is the movement, now in progress in England, for a revised edition of the English translation of the Scriptures. The Convocation of Canterbury not long since appointed a committee of sixteen to take charge of the work. That committee is divided into two sections, one taking charge of the Old Testament, the other of the New. Each company is to be increased by eighteen scholars and Divines, including two Congregationalists, (Dr. L. Alexander and Professor Newth), three Baptists, (Drs. Golch, Angus, and B. Davies), three Presbyterians, (Professors Fairbairn and Eadie, and Dr. A. Roberts), a Wesleyan, (Professor Moulton), a Unitarian, (Rev. G. V. Smith), and a Roman Catholic, (Rev. J. H. Newman), who however declines to serve. The original committee includes eight bishops and other functionaries of the established church. The following are the principles of revision:

1. To introduce as few alterations as possible into the text of the authorized version consistently with faithfulness.
2. To limit, as far as possible, the expression of such alterations to the language of the authorized and earlier English versions.
3. Each company to go twice over the portion to be revised—once provisionally, the second time finally, and on principles of voting as herein-after provided.
4. That the text to be adopted be that for which the evidence is decidedly preponderating, and that when the text so adopted differs from that from which the authorized version was made, the alteration be indicated in the margin.
5. To make or retain no change in the text on the second final revision by such company except two-thirds of those present approve of the same, but on the first revision to decide by simple majorities.
6. In every case of proposed alteration that may have given rise to discussion, to defer the voting thereupon till the next meeting whensoever

the same shall be required by one-third of those present at the meeting, such intended vote to be announced in the notice for the next meeting.

7. To revise the headings of chapters, pages, paragraphs, italics, and punctuation.

8. To refer, on the part of each company, when considered desirable, to divines, scholars, and literary men, whether at home or abroad, for their opinions.

The committee on the New Testament, with their co-adjutors, assembled according to appointment on the 22d of July, at the Jerusalem Chamber of the Westminster Cloisters, and made the preliminary arrangements for their work.

We shall hope well from this enterprise. It is agreed on all hands that the lapse of two centuries and a half has given occasion and furnished materials for an improvement of our admirable version. It could not be otherwise. A general discussion of the subject has prepared the public mind. The singular progress of the text-criticism of the New Testament has now brought us to an advantageous position, where little further in that line is to be waited for—unless it be a few years to digest our materials; while as there seems to be no immediate prospect of further light on the Old Testament text, it is well that the erroneous, inadequate, obsolete, obscure, feeble, and otherwise unsuitable renderings should now be rectified.

The difficult and disturbing question hitherto has been, who shall do it? We trust it may prove that Providence has solved that question well. There certainly is a fitness that the same church which gave us the version should revise it. At no time since that version was made has the church of England possessed such an amount of Biblical scholarship as now. The names of Ellicott, Alford, Lightfoot, Perowne and others, command universal respect. The committee ally to themselves able and representative men of other denominations, and provide for a wide consultation of scholars at home and abroad. The plan is on the whole a good one and effective. We can think of none better that is feasible. The endeavor to form a committee from various countries would have been cumbrous and impracticable. The attempt to organize a union movement from the outset would not have steered clear of jealousies, while environed with difficulties and delays. No country is so fitted to lead as England, no body of men in England so qualified by scholarship and historically prescriptive right as the established church. Their measures seem to have been devised in the spirit of wisdom and liberality. In whatever mode such a revision should be conducted, it would be accepted only so far as it commended itself by its intrinsic qualities. So it will be in the present instance. But we shall earnestly hope for a revised edition which the sons of the Pilgrims can as heartily accept as did our ancestors, when they gradually abandoned the Geneva version for that of King James. The enterprise will signalize the memorial year.



**THE COMPOSITION OF COUNCILS.**—Two very important principles were settled by the late General Association of Connecticut, (so far as that body is concerned), as follows :

"That it is the sense of this body, that a minister who is in regular standing in an association of Congregational ministers, may be invited by a special letter-missive as a member of an ecclesiastical council : and that a church served by a minister on its own invitation who is pastor elect, acting pastor, stated supply, or stated preacher, and who is a member in regular standing of an association of Congregational ministers, may be invited by a letter-missive to be represented in a council by its pastor-elect, acting pastor, stated supply, or stated preacher, and by a lay delegate ; it being understood that a letter-missive, inviting a church to be present by its pastor and delegate, does not thereby authorize a church to send its pastor-elect, acting pastor, stated supply, or stated preacher, in place of a pastor."

These decisions will justly carry great weight elsewhere. They were carefully and deliberately reached. The subject had been referred, a year previously, to a committee of which Dr. Bacon was chairman ; it was long and earnestly debated in the Association ; and this was the result. It will commend itself not alone by the influence which carried it, but still more emphatically by the christian wisdom of the decision. The first principle simply recognizes a practice of long standing, growing out of the expanded relations of Congregationalism, and openly admits the right of the denomination to avail itself directly of the wisdom of all its tried men without a resort to indirect, clumsy, and unworthy devices ; it affirms that which the sanctified common sense of the churches probably will not surrender. The second principle, while recognizing the christian liberty of the churches, puts the matter in a business-like shape, and calls things by their right names. Exception has been taken to making the minister's associational relations a test of his ministerial standing ; but if the minister's official function and character are not lost on his ceasing to be a pastor, perhaps it is not easy to employ a better test.

**REV. STEPHEN PEET.**—We are pleased to be able, in this number of the Review, to present a memorial of one of the most efficient of the christian pioneers who came, in the name of the Lord, to take possession of this region, and to plant in it the permanent institutions of our Protestant, Puritan christianity. We are sure that many who knew him will be glad to look on the likeness of his face, and to revive the memories of his active life through the sketch prepared for us ; and for those who have come in to build on the foundations laid by his self denying toil, it will be good to look back and trace the beginnings of things, and put deserved honor on him who was called to that special work, while to God is ascribed the glory of all that has been wrought.

We hope, from time to time, by a similar presentation of other servants of the Master, found faithful on this field, to make the Review a means of perpetuating the memories of the past, as well as of quickening present activities and enlivening hopes for the future.



WOMAN SUFFRAGE hardly keeps pace with the ardent hopes of its advocates. The quiet dropping of it by the Illinois Convention, the prodigiously adverse elections in Vermont, the overwhelming vote of the British House of Commons, the resolute dismissal of the subject by the Legislature of Connecticut, coming in quick succession upon a cause whose strength lies so large in the enthusiasm of inconsiderate gallantry on one side, and in the burning desire on the other to remedy the deep woes of inbred sin by mere outward changes, must be peculiarly disappointing. If a simple railroad detention placed one of the most prominent reformers, according to her own sprightly description, "in a good state of mind to say 'Damn it,'" what additional words will express the gentle heaviness of her bosom now?

NOT DESCENDED FROM A MONKEY.—We breathe more freely now. Carl Vogt, one of the reputed prominent advocates of the man-monkey theory, has retracted—or explained. In a lecture on Microcephalia before the Medical Association of Vienna, in December last, he utters himself thus:

"It has been an object of endeavor with me to throw some light upon the family-tree of the human race by means of these investigations. If it be correct that the arrest of development which causes microcephalia begins at a period when the island of Reil [in the human brain] lies exposed, and is not covered by the convolutions which afterwards apply themselves over it—at a period, in fact, when the convolutions hardly exist—then it is plain that the human type must have branched off from some type in which a similar formation characterized the adult brain. And since the island of Reil exists and is covered by convolutions in all the apes, without exception, it follows that man cannot be derived from the ape. [Sensation! The speaker laughs, and continues.] This will surprise you, my respected colleagues; for I have always been regarded by general consent as a defender of the theory which derives man from the ape. I have always protested against this, but the general judgment cannot be set aside."

So far, so good. But our relief is not unmitigated. We have been prone to sympathize with the Rev. Sydney Smith: "I have sometimes, perhaps, felt a little uneasy at Exeter 'Change, from contrasting the monkeys with the 'prentice boys who are teasing them, but a few pages of Locke or Milton have always restored me. I feel so sure that the blue ape without a tail will never rival us in poetry, painting and music," etc. But Vogt, still disturbs our equanimity by insisting that, however, "both types, man and ape, must have originated from one common stock." A medical friend of ours, who lends us the lecture, aptly suggests that this common ancestor of man and ape, is evidently Vogt's god.

SPECULATIVE PHILOSOPHY.—There is hardly an intellectual phenomenon of the new States more noteworthy and significant than the issue at St. Louis, for more than three years past, of the quarterly "Journal of Speculative Philosophy." It is edited by Wm. T. Harris, Esq., Superintendent

of Schools at St. Louis, and covers a field of speculative thought hitherto unrepresented in current American literature. Most of the fourteen numbers now published is occupied with translations from the German, which appear to be close renderings of both thought and idiom in many instances. The writers translated are Fichte, Hegel, Kant, Schelling, Schopenhauer, Leibnitz, Goethe, Winckelmann, Descartes, Benard, Treutowski, etc. Hegel preponderating. Indeed, the "Journal" is strongly Hegelian, which makes it no less a phenomenon, for "a new country," by any means. The last number—*apropos* of a translation of Hegel's "Science of Rights' Morals, and Religion,"—commends Hegel's extended "Philosophy of Religion" (2 vols., in German), as eminently worthy of translation into English, and adds: "It unfolds completely the relation of Man to the Absolute in his various degrees or stages of self-consciousness, and demonstrates completely the supremacy of the Christian Religion over all others." There are hardly any deep and hard questions in philosophy, logic and art, which the "Journal" does not propose to discuss in the translated treatises of great thinkers.

**NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.**—The proposal made in connection with the Memorial Convention at Chicago, to establish a National Conference of Churches as part of our regular polity, necessitated by the vast expansion of our field and our work, seems to meet with general favor. The General Associations (or Conferences) of Ohio, Massachusetts, Iowa, and Maine, have taken action more or less decided, contemplating such a union. Vermont alone speaks adversely, but nevertheless appoints a committee to represent that State, in case the movement proceeds, as doubtless it will. We are not so much surprised at the hesitancy of some of our New England brethren as they themselves will be, when once the result is accomplished. It is hard to get out of the old ruts; hard, in spite of all the lessons of ecclesiastical history in America, to appreciate the full results of the let-alone policy; peculiarly hard for our noble brethren in the glorious fastnesses of Vermont to comprehend the situation of Congregationalism in the whole country. It has been a long, slow lesson to Massachusetts and Connecticut; but Divine Providence is a good teacher. We must learn to join hands, as well as hearts.

**COMMUNION.**—A few preachers have a custom of extending a very open invitation to the communion table, and "throwing the responsibility" on the congregation. The propriety of the custom was curiously illustrated not long since, in the case of certain Chinese at North Adams, if we may believe the correspondent of the *Boston Post*:

"On a recent communion Sunday, eight of them attended the Congregational Church, and occupied two adjoining pews. After the breaking of the bread, the pastor extended his usual invitation—this is a very liberal church—to all who loved the Lord Jesus Christ to partake, and

the deacons passed the plate to the Chinamen. One, who sat at the door of the first pew, evidently understanding something of the rite, motioned to his companions to decline, which they did. When the wine was circulated, however, it was evident to those whose curiosity got the better of their devotion, and who were watching the Orientals, from their whispering and smiling, that they were resolved on partaking of this; but the deacon passed them by this time, and did not extend the cup. This naturally caused a little amusement to the irreligious spectators, but the Chinese appeared imperturbable.

CONGREGATIONAL HISTORY.—The Rev. Dr. John Waddington, of London, whose laborious, and exact, and suggestive "Congregational History" the *Round Table* announced and characterized last year, is continuing the work, and making progress in a second volume. The first is now an assured and accepted success, though less widely known among us than it deserves to be. The same may be said of Skeat's recent "History of Free Churches in England." It would be of vast benefit to our American Congregationalism this year—this memorial year—if we could compass a large importation and sale of these two valuable histories, and the kindred works of the late Dr. Robert Vaughan—almost totally unknown in this country. Of Waddington's unique "Congregational History" Senator Buckingham, of Connecticut—*O! si sic omnes!*—(this of U. S. senators and Congregational deacons)—has sent twelve copies to public libraries, we learn. *Eastern* libraries, we infer, as we know of no appearance of the book in western ones. It ought to be on the shelves of every college and theological seminary founded by descendants of the Puritans. Dr. Waddington's object now is "to work out the history *internationally*," which will give the second volume unusual value to American congregationalists. By a private note from him we learn, that he "entertains the confidence, from the materials collected, that this can be done with interest and success."

PAPAL INFALLIBILITY.—The vote on this question in the Ecumenical Council was, in Carlylian phrase, "significant of much." It was symptomatic of the fatuity that marks the Papal counsels, that this issue should have been pressed to a decision so soon after the famous syllabus had defied the progress of the civilized world. And it was indicative of waning power that under all the pressure only about three-fourths of the council were *willing* to vote it unconditionally. The action is peculiarly embarrassing to English Catholics, because, when their emancipation was proposed, their bishops were publicly interrogated whether they held that the Pope could give decision on matters of faith and morals which would be binding on nations, without the concurrence of the church. All their bishops replied that such was not the Catholic belief. And the reply is on record in the Parliamentary reports. The doctrine was peculiarly unpalatable to a portion of the American delegates. It will aid them little in the

work of propagandism here. Archbishop Purcell, in a public speech at Cincinnati recently, attempted to clear up the subject; but the newspaper report of his address was darkness visible.

THE MOABITE STONE is justly regarded as among the most remarkable of the archæological discoveries of the present day. In 1838 the Prussian missionary, Rev. F. Klein, saw, at Dhiban (Dibon) a black basalt slab, three feet nine by two feet four, covered on the upper surface with thirty lines of inscription in the old Phœnician alphabet. Soon after its discovery the natives broke it in pieces, by heating it and throwing water upon it. Some of the fragments are lost, parts of the inscription are illegible, and the meaning of some words doubtful; but the text, as a whole, as given in the copy we have seen, is quite intelligible. It records the victories gained, and the edifices and cities built by "Mesha, King of Moab." He begins with his name and his father's name, and says that he built a high place to "Chemosh;" speaks of Omri, King of Israel, with whom he fought successfully, and the men of Gad; and mentions Medeba, Kiriathaim, Nebo, Jahaz, Beth-Camoth, Bozrah, Baal Meon, Horonaim, more or less circumstantially. If this be the Mesha mentioned in the Third Chapter of Second Kings, the inscription carries us back about 900 years before Christ. The style of the characters coincides with the supposition; and scholars are inclined to regard it as the oldest monument of the Semitic languages in existence.